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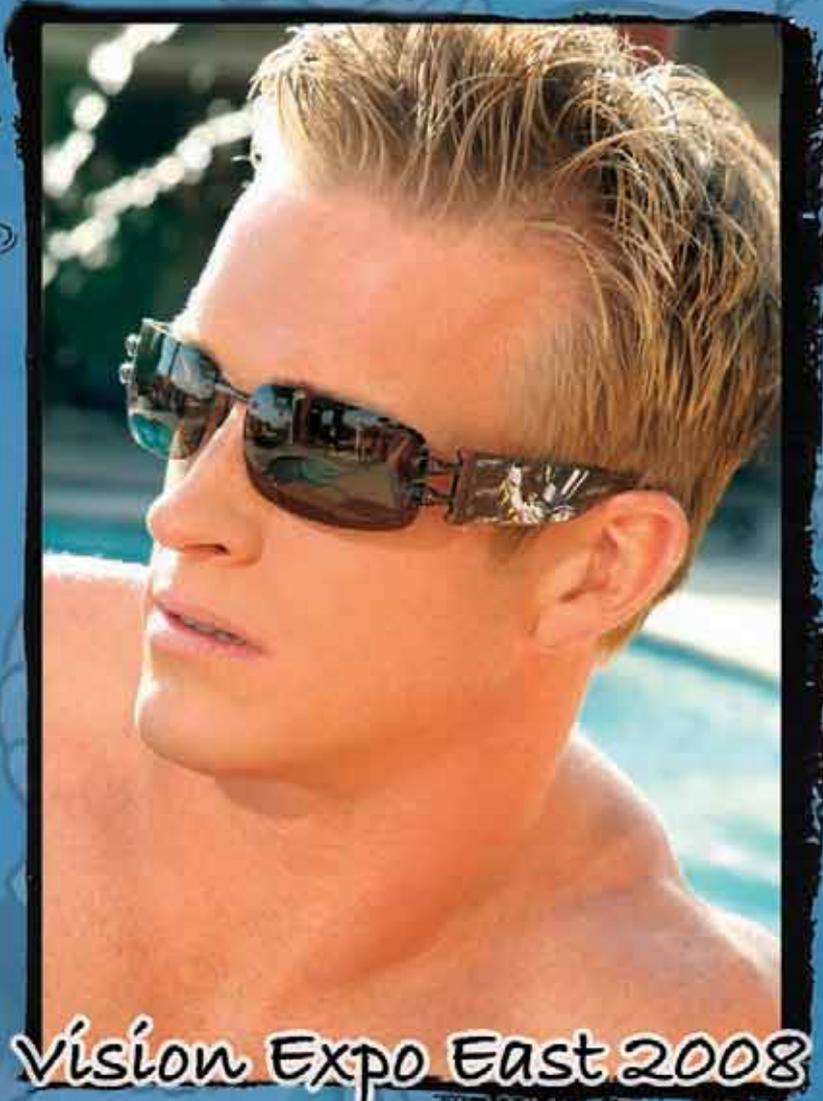
VISION

MARCH 31, 2008

VOL. 22 NO. 4 \$15

Ed Hardy
Vintage Tattoo Eyewear™

Booth # 1832



VISION MONDAY

Vision Expo East 2008

Another great line from Revolution Eyewear Inc.



Another great line from Revolution Eyewear Inc.

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VSP files appeal on court ruling in tax-exemption case.
page **8**

A "new" Viva Int'l reorganizes with an eye to the future.
page **12**

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VisionMonday

The Newsmagazine for the Eye Care Industry

Jobson
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The New Rules of the Game:



Sport Performance Eyewear Brings Home the Gold

Photos from iStockphoto

With more than three quarters of the U.S. population engaging in some form of outdoor activity, consumers are looking for eyewear that protects their vision and enhances their performance. VM explored what these millions of people are seeking in their sport performance eyewear, which retailers and brands have a corner on the market and how the optical industry can bring home a bigger piece of this \$730 billion pie. Page 64

NEWS



Expo Show Preview

An inside look at what's being offered on the show floor at Expo East. Also, in Retail Dispensary, track the new product launches and promotions planned for the show.

page **42**

SCENE & HEARD

VisionWatch Research

The ongoing survey conducted by Jobson and VCA reveals the vision market remained virtually flat in 2007.

page **40**

- Vision-Ease receives new financing, withdraws IPO. Page 8
- Industry buzz builds for Eye Rock concert. Page 10
- Special VM Section: Marchon at 25. M1



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Matt Lytle

-----Original Message-----
From: Shamir Research & Development Team- Israel
Sent: Thursday, February 7, 2008 1:53 PM
To: Matt Lytle
Subject: Out of Office AutoReply: New Product Updates

Dear Sender,

Please leave us to our work. We're getting all e-mails but we're not answering them. We've locked ourselves in our R&D laboratory for the past 6 months and won't see the light of day until our new products are ready for market. Please send our families our love.

Shamir Research & Development Team - Israel

From: Matt Lytle
Sent: Thursday, February 7, 2008 1:52 PM
To: Shamir Research & Development Team- Israel
Subject: New Product Updates
Importance: High

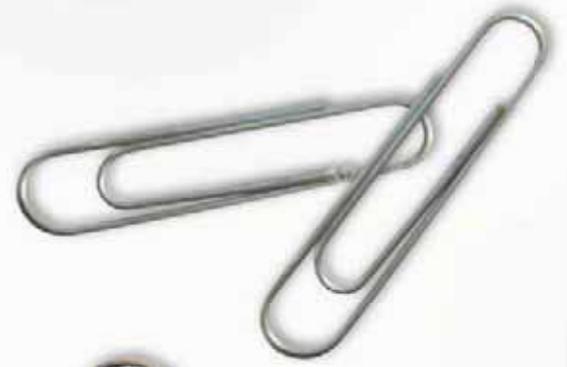
Hi Folks,

I know you're working hard on the new products we'll be releasing at VEE in New York, I just wanted to check in with you to make sure everything is still on track. We're getting everything ready on our end to start "beating the drums", we just need to know that the new products will be ready by April. When you have a chance, could you drop us a line and let us know? Also, just wanted to make sure I have our internal product site correct, it's www.WhatsNewShamir.com right?

We can't wait to see everyone at the show, it's going to be an honor to have the team there for the big announcement! Just in case you don't have the Shamir booth number, it's LP2806.

Best Regards,

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EDITOR'S NOTE

From Sea to Shining See



Marge Axelrad
Editorial Director

With a major trade show event like Vision Expo approaching next month, and given the unsettling headlines jarring the U.S. economy, it's a good time to take a renewed look at just how eyewear (frames, lenses, contact lenses, sunwear) is being presented in dispensaries to consumers who are thinking of many things when considering their eyewear purchases.

Recognize the good news is that they're there. Weighed against other possible purchases, from gas to groceries, home goods to electronics, apparel to entertainment, if they are in your place of business, they are 'ready.'

Certainly the influence and recommendation of the eye doctor continues to play a huge role in steering patients' understanding and expectations about what types of choices are helpful and necessary for healthy, quality vision. So hopefully, you are leverag-

ing that expertise in dialogs with patients.

But it's also more critical than ever for patients-who-become-consumers—when they walk into the dispensary or retail setting—to see more than a sea. Of frames.

Do not think lightly of the influence of how eyewear is presented in displays, in vignettes in windows and by dispensing associates. This is a big thing and sends important cues to people deciding what to try on and to buy.

Some offices focus on first discussing lens options with patients; others let consumers, drawn to frame choices, go there first.

But whichever way it goes in your dispensary, the manner in which collections can be emphasized to complement selections on frame walls is a helpful directional signal.

There are many great brands and signature looks of eyewear in our industry. Convey that excitement to the customers who have decided, among all the things they could choose to buy in this challenging environment, that they want to buy new eyewear. ■

IN THIS ISSUE

News

- COLTS offers FDA impact testing program to dispensers **16**
- Vera Wang renews with Kenmark Group through 2012 **22**
- The McGee Group signs license agreement with Sally Hansen **22**
- Gerber and Rothstein form Global Impact Group **27**
- Marcolin signs agreement for Dquared2 Eyewear **34**

Expo East Show Preview **42**

Scene & Heard

- Pucci throws upper eastside shindig **54**
- Ermenegildo Zegna opens new Fifth Avenue flagship boutique. **56**

Exam Lanes

- Short becomes VSP board chair as firm boosts aid to private ODs **60**

Retail Dispensary

Launches

- Luxottica introduces Club Monaco Eyewear . **72**
- Nouveau bows Fleur de Lis Eyewear **74**
- Marchon unveils Karl Lagerfeld Sun **76**
- Sàfilo intros Jimmy Choo Sunwear **80**
- L'Amey America launches Theory Eyewear . . **82**
- Fusion Eyewear launches Dutz Eyewear . . . **84**
- Augen Optics Launches 8mm Short-Corridor PAL **86**

Columns

- F.Y.Eye **82**
- High Visibility **95**
- Bold Face **100**
- Contact Lenses **102**

Inside the Lab

- OLA members approve sweeping changes to bylaws **104**

Business Essentials

- When horseplay becomes hazing. **114**

Opinion

- Keeping an eye on the economy **116**

Balance Sheet

- CooperVision posts 12 percent revenue gain in Q1 **118**
- After Q4 income drops, LCA-Vision cuts work force **118**



22



42



74



80



82



95

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NEWS VIEWS

VSP Files Appeal on Court Ruling in Tax-Exemption Case

RANCHO CORDOVA, Calif.—Vision Service Plan filed an appeal against a recent ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit that VSP, a not-for-profit corporation, does not qualify for exemption from paying taxes. In its February ruling, the appeals court sided with the Internal Revenue Service and affirmed a December 2006 federal

trial court decision.

VSP's motion to appeal was filed on March 13. A company spokesman told **VM**, "A full panel of this court can look at the case again, the decision could stand or we could choose to pursue this case by a further appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court."

VSP officials have said the company will continue to operate as a not-for-profit

organization with or without the tax exemption, and that any excess revenues generated will continue to be used "to further the health of the community through charity care, patient education, peer review, quality assurance, and patient satisfaction programs."

The appeals court's February ruling came following oral arguments held in

December, when attorneys representing VSP argued the company was entitled to recover taxes paid in 2003 because it served substantial numbers of individuals eligible for Medicare and Medicaid and provided vision care services that for-profit insurers did not even offer.

VSP was originally granted status as a tax-exempt organization in 1960. ■■

Vision-Ease Receives New Financing, Withdraws IPO

RAMSEY, Minn.—Vision-Ease Lens has withdrawn its registration for an initial public offering (IPO), according to documents filed with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. In October 2006, the Ramsey-based lens manufacturer filed to raise \$86 million through an IPO.

Rich Faber, chief financial officer of Vision-Ease, told **VM**, "Our owners elected not to pursue an IPO due to the turbulent markets. There is no need to

force a transaction at a discount. However, the company continues to do well on both the top line and the bottom line."

Faber said, Dallas-based Orix Leveraged Finance arranged to finance a recapitalization of Vision-Ease worth \$117 million. Vision-Ease is privately owned by Insight Equity A.P.X, a Texas limited partnership, which purchased Vision-Ease in August, 2004 from BMC Industries, which had declared bankruptcy. ■■

Ophthalmic Imaging Systems Reports Fiscal 2007 Results

NEW YORK—Ophthalmic Imaging Systems (OTCBB: OISI) reported financial results for the quarter and year ended Dec. 31, 2007.

For the year ended Dec. 31, 2007, OIS reported net revenues of \$14.5 million compared with net revenues of \$15.8 million for 2006. Net income for the year ended Dec. 31, 2007 was \$1.6 million, compared with net income of \$2.2 million for the prior year. Sales and net income growth during 2007 were partially offset by two large contracts received in 2006.

For the three months ended Dec. 31, 2007, OIS reported net revenues of \$3.6 million, compared with net revenues of \$4.4 million for the same period in 2006. Net income for the fourth quarter of 2007 was \$0.1 million, compared with net income of \$0.6 million for the fourth quarter of 2006.

Gil Allon, CEO of OIS, stated, "We experienced a softening in demand for our digital imaging equipment in the second half of 2007. While we are disappointed with our overall performance for the year, we have several exciting initiatives underway that will simplify our corporate structure, address a broader market opportunity and diversify our product lines within different markets."

"As previously announced, we recent-

ly introduced a new, wholly owned subsidiary, Abraxas Medical Solutions, which simultaneously acquired the assets of AcerMed Inc. Abraxas will focus exclusively on strengthening our foothold in the multi-billion dollar Electronic Medical Records and Practice Management software market.

"We are making significant investments into Abraxas to complete development of its proprietary platform, and anticipate it to fully rollout its specialized offerings by the end of 2008. In addition, due to the acquisition of Abraxas, NextGen chose recently to discontinue its relationship with OIS, which will also affect our revenue and cash-flow over the short-term. For these reasons, we will be looking at 2008 as a transition year for OIS as a whole."

"Also in 2007, we announced a non-binding agreement to acquire our majority shareholder, MediVision Medical Imaging. This merger will allow us to gain greater control over our research and development capabilities, sales and distribution in Europe, and simplify our capital structure. We anticipate closing this merger in the second half of 2008 once the deal is approved by the boards and shareholders of both companies," concluded Mr. Allon. ■■

Calif. Court Issues Permanent Injunction to Revolution for IMF Series in Case With Aspex

LOS ANGELES—In the ongoing litigation matter in case 2-1087 between Revolution Eyewear and Aspex Eyewear involving certain magnetic clip patents, the U.S. District Court in the Central District of California, on Feb. 25, 2008, entered a permanent injunction against Revolution, enjoining the company from "selling, offering to sell or manufacture in the U.S. its IMF and IMFT frame sets which were found on April 30, 2007 to infringe U.S. patent number RE 37,545." It enjoined Revolution from "importing into the U.S." these frame sets and "from publishing and distributing marketing or promotional materials regarding IMF and IMFT frame sets."

The U.S. District Court also reinforced the award of damages, determined by a jury in September 2007, for a total of

\$4.7 million to be paid by Revolution.

Joe Trojan, attorney for Revolution, confirmed to **Vision Monday**, "Revolution is no longer selling and has not been selling the IMF and IMFT frame sets for several months." He noted that over the past year, Revolution has begun to sell a new line, REV, which "does not infringe on any of Aspex patents and Aspex has not accused REV eyewear from infringing on its patents in any way."

While he acknowledged Revolution abides by the injunction, he added, "Revolution is appealing the amount of damages in the matter."

In a statement about the Feb. 25 decision, Aspex said, "This latest development in the Federal Court reinforces Aspex's resolve and determination to enforce its rights." ■■

VCA Hosting Exhibitor Event in L.A.

ALEXANDRIA, Va.—The Vision Council of America (VCA) is traveling to Los Angeles, to wine and dine its members and International Vision Expo exhibitors at the VCA Exhibitor Town Hall West.

The group is inviting company representatives to attend the event at Roy's in Los Angeles from 5:30—8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22 where show management will host a cocktail reception and dinner featuring the Hawaiian Fusion cuisine of Chef Roy Yamaguchi.

A brief presentation on the many programs and opportunities available only for International Vision Expo exhibitors will be given during the dinner.

Reed will also host its Exhibitor University program earlier the same day. This is a free, focused seminar on how to be a better exhibitor and produce an increased return on investment. Presented by Jefferson Davis, the course will provide practical information, tools, skills

and techniques to make all the pieces of the show puzzle come together." Exhibitor University will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Los Angeles Convention Center, only a few blocks away from the dinner.

Also, Vision Expo is reminding people to attend "Accelerating Your Sales Cycle at International Vision Expo East," to be held the day before the show floor opens next month, on April 10. The course is designed to help exhibitors maximize their goals for the show and prepare how to communicate your products to attendees. The free event, targeting exhibit marketing and sales managers, directors and all exhibit staff, will be held April 10, noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Jacob Javits Convention Center, Room 1E03.

To register for both events, contact Chris Harar, Show Program Coordinator, at (703) 740-1097 or via email at charar@visionsite.org. ■■



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NEWS VIEWS

Industry Buzz Builds for Eye Rock Concert



NEW YORK—The buzz from the optical industry is getting louder for Eye Rock, the first annual benefit concert for the Give the Gift of Sight Foundation. The show, set for April 10 at New York's famed China Club, will feature more than 20 of the industry's best rock musicians and singers.

"Eye Rock anticipation is building and ticket sales are heating up," said Susan Knobler, vice-president of Give the Gift of Sight. "We're noticing that some companies are purchasing multiple tickets for key accounts, sales awards and/or tokens of appreciation. What a great way to host a colleague in the industry for a guaranteed good time while helping a wonderful cause."

At presstime, Eye Rock's sponsors included Luxottica Group, Jobson Medical Information, Seiko Optical Products of America, Vision Council of America, Vision-Ease, Allergan, Essilor, Global Impact Group, CIBA Vision, Cooper

Vision, Ocuco, Younger Optics, Char-mant, Eyewear by ROI, Gadge USA, Polycore and Optical Training Institute.

Several different bands will perform at Eye Rock, including OffAxis and special guests Bad Habits, the EyeDocs of Rock. All proceeds benefit Give the Gift of Sight, a family of charitable vision care programs offering free eye care and eyewear to underprivileged people in North America and in developing countries.



Members of the OffAxis band rehearsing last year during International Vision Expo West. Pictured, left to right, are Robert Schanbaum, Bill Gerber, Steve Santinelli and Calvin Howell.

Steve Santinelli, Eye Rock's musical producer and the leader of OffAxis, said the optical rockers have been working hard in preparation for the show. "The house will be rockin'," he promised. "The club can hold 300 to 400 people, and we hope to fill it to the rafters."

Santinelli noted that the China Club, which gained fame as a hangout for rock stars, is being completely renovated. Eye Rock will be the first event to take place in the newly remodeled club.

In addition to Santinelli, who sings and plays guitar in OffAxis, the band consists of Joe Santinelli, percussion; Steve Wheaton, drums (Santinelli International); Andy Karp, guitar and vocals (Jobson Medical Information); Robert Shanbaum, keyboard and vocals (Ocuco); Bill Gerber, drums/MC (Global Impact Group/GIG); Calvin Howell, bass guitar (Polycore Optical USA) and Jonathan Schwartz, congas (Hoya Vision Care, North America).

Among the other Eye Rock performers are Randy Adams, guitar; Miles McLennan, bass guitar and vocals (Allergan); Paul Shyer, guitar and vocals; Jason Shyer, guitar and vocals (Eastern States Eyewear); Maribel Lee, vocals (Luxottica Retail); Bob Stein, guitar; John Vaught, drums (National Vision); Gerry Ludwin, saxophone (Optical Training); John Alofs, drums (ROI Eyewear); Eric Lindquist, bass guitar (Specialty Lens); Shane Lindsey, drums; Steph Hamilton, guitar (Topcon Medical Systems); Dr. Gary Gerber, keyboards (The Power Practice) and Mike Cooper, drums (TriSupreme Optical).

Bad Habits, The Eye Docs of Rock, consists of Jules (Mike) Raies, OD, bass guitar and vocals; Pat Dollenmayer, OD; guitar and vocals; Tony Fenton, OD, drums and vocals; Ken Kuhn, OD, guitar and vocals; Mark Schindler, Universal Music & Video Distribution, keyboard and vocals.

In addition to the music, an electric guitar signed by all four members of Pink Floyd will be auctioned off at the show. The guitar was donated by Don Pina of Gold Coast Ophthalmics.

Eye Rock will take place April 10 at the China Club, 268 W. 47th St., from 8:00 P.M. to 11:00 P.M., with doors opening at 7:30 P.M. Tickets are available online at www.givethegiftofsight.org. Tickets are \$50 each when purchased on-line through April 8. Tickets at the door, if available, will be \$75.

For more information about sponsoring Eye Rock, contact Susan Knobler, Give the Gift of Sight, (513) 765-6248, or sknobler@luxotticaretail.com.

FDA Panel May Take Second Look at LASIK Surgery

SILVER SPRING, Md.—The U.S. Food and Drug Administration may review the impact of LASIK eye surgery on improving consumers' lives, a senior FDA official reportedly said this week.

Daniel Schultz, MD, director of FDA's Center for Devices and Radiological Health, was quoted as saying several concerns have been raised

regarding patient satisfaction with the LASIK (laser-assisted in situ keratomileusis) vision correction procedure. He said an FDA advisory panel is likely to hold a public meeting to discuss the issue. That meeting, reportedly to be held as early as next month, would focus on patients' quality of life after LASIK surgery.

Last July, the FDA responded to an individual's requests for a halt to the procedures and withdrawal of their FDA approval. The agency said then that the devices were safe and effective, but that advisory-panel discussions "could complement" its other safety monitoring.

The laser procedure was approved by the FDA in the mid-1990s. ■■

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NEWS VIEWS

A 'New' Viva Int'l Reorganizes for the Future

By Marge Axelrad
Editorial Director

SOMERVILLE, N.J.—Viva International Group, a subsidiary of the Pennsylvania-based Highmark Vision Group, has formalized and implemented a new organization structure for its business, one designed, said Frank Rescigna, president and CEO of the company since Jan. 1, “to capture the spirit and potential of the ‘new’ Viva, which will focus on the best possible customer service and support to our accounts, our sales and distribution organizations around the world, which will leverage the DNA of our brands.”

In addition, Viva, which is marking its 30th anniversary this year, will unveil a totally new company booth and corporate image at Vision Expo East next month.

Continuing as senior vice president of product and purchasing is Regina Lage and as senior vice president of finance, Pete Singagliese.

Eleven current Viva executives received promotions and several new positions have been created, Rescigna said.

“This group of individuals are a talented force that has been untapped for the last several years. From the time I came to Viva, I’ve seen a truly amazing amount of talent, passion and commitment among our people to each other and the company. These moves will create a strong corporate culture that will have a positive effect on our overall business.

“We have accomplished a tremendous amount,” Rescigna continued. “We have renewed multi-year agreements with key brands such as Guess and Tommy Hilfiger. We have reinforced our commitment to such luxury brands as Ermenegildo Zegna and Escada, Givenchy, Etro and Furla, which are distributed in North America through our arrangement with Italy’s DeRigo Group. These are important components of a very strong brand portfolio that also includes Gant, Candie’s, Bongo, Harley-Davidson, Catherine Deneuve as well as our own ‘house’ brands including Magic Clips, Magic Twist, V Lock, Viva and Savvy.”

The new promotions range among positions at director level to senior vice president in addition to new personnel



Viva's senior management team. Seated, from left: Regina Lage, SVP, product and purchasing, and Rescigna; Standing, from left: Ken Liming, SVP of IT and operations; Pete Singagliese, SVP Finance, Drew Opperman, SVP International Sales. Not in photo: Mick Kunish, SVP business and sales development.

in customer service and new positions among Viva's U.S. sales organization. The senior VPs and co-brand managers report to Rescigna.

Among the changes:

- Kenneth Liming, with Viva 17 years, and previously vice president information technology, has been promoted to senior vice president, operations and information technology.

- Drew Opperman, with Viva 18 years, has been promoted from vice president of international sales to senior vice president of international sales and will oversee all of Viva's businesses outside the U.S. and Canada.

- Mike Kunish, with Viva six years, most recently director of business development, has been promoted to senior vice president, business and sales development. Said Rescigna, “One of Mick's roles will be to manage and oversee key accounts, but he will also be involved in developing strategic plans for Viva's future.”

- Cheryl Grobelny, with Viva 9 years, has been promoted from director of human resources and administration to vice president of human resources and administration.

- Susan McCormack Lopez, with Viva for 10 years, has been promoted from senior director, marketing to vice president, marketing.

- Phil Turnage, with Viva for 16 years and most recently national sales manager, has been promoted to vice president,

USA optical sales.

- Mike Roden, with Viva 12 years, was most recently director of corporate accounts and is now associate vice president, international sales.

- Jennifer Orentas, with Viva 3 years and previously director of brand management has been named Guess global general manager.

- Peter Van Donseelaar, with Viva four years, was manager, inventory planner and is now director, inventory planning.

- Roxanne Galari, with Viva six years, was brand manager and has been promoted to co-director, brand sales.

She will oversee Zegna, Escada, Etro, Furla, Givenchy, Candie's, Gongo and the Magic Twist/Clip and V-Lock lines.

- Elizabeth Tontodonati, with Viva for five years, most recently brand manager, has been promoted to co-director, brand sales, overseeing Tommy Hilfiger, Gant and Harley.

Viva has also hired a new customer service manager, Ed Delviscovo, who has experience with Marcolin and Charman. The company will be upgrading its telephone, distribution and internet support systems. Another new addition

in this regard has been Eugene Arcencia, director of programming.

Said Rescigna, “We have completely reorganized the people and functions, have enhanced intra-company communications and those with our brand partners and our accounts.”

On the sales side, under Turnage, Viva's approximately 200 sales reps will also now receive training and support from an expanded team of regional managers.

“We have set up and separated each brand to put cross-functional teams in place for marketing, in order to work hand in hand with product development and design. We now have ‘brand champions’ in place to enhance what we create and deliver to our customers,” Rescigna said.

The changes, which started in January and were formally announced on March 17, Rescigna said, “have had immediate impact, resulting in record first quarter sales.”

He added, “It's our goal to drive Viva's service levels and sales to record highs and now we have the infrastructure and



Viva's president and CEO, Frank Rescigna

culture to do it.”

Viva maintains offices and direct sales in the United Kingdom, France, Brazil, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan and via joint ventures in Mexico, Australia, Germany, Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, Spain and Portugal. In total, the company's products are distributed in more than 60 countries.

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NEWS VIEWS

COLTS Offers FDA Impact Testing Program to Dispensers

CLEARWATER, Fla.—COLTS Laboratories, the ophthalmic testing company based here, is launching a program through which dispensers can receive certification that the plastic lenses they edge are in compliance with the Food and Drug Administration's requirements for impact resistance.

The program follows the FDA's recent release of controversial new guidelines for lens impact testing. FDA

officials are currently reviewing comments from industry groups such as The Vision Council, the National Academy of Opticianry, the Optical Laboratories Association and others, that challenge certain aspects of the proposal.

According to COLTS president, John Young, the COLTS program calls for dispensers to provide a representative sample of lenses made from past prescriptions, randomly chosen, that they

have dispensed. These surfaced and coated lenses must then be edged by the dispenser and sent to COLTS for testing every quarter. COLTS will test four sets of lenses using its FDA-accepted impact program.

"COLTS has the only impact program that has been accepted by the FDA other than the FDA's own program," said Young. "The COLTS program requires between 75 percent to 86

percent fewer lenses be impact tested to meet the current requirement for compliance. More importantly, the failure allowance in testing is normally 6.5 percent in the standard FDA protocol, but is only 0.3 percent to 1.3 percent in the COLTS FDA protocol, depending on the sample size..."

Young said the estimated cost for the program is \$900 per year, depending upon total lens cost and volume. ■■

Industry Comments on FDA Lens Impact Guidelines Now on VM Web Site

NEW YORK—Comments from optical industry organizations and independent eyecare professionals about the Food and Drug Administration's controversial proposed guidelines for eyeglass lens impact testing are now available for viewing on Vision Monday's Web site, www.visionmonday.com. The comments, which were submitted to the FDA over the past few months, are mostly opposed to the FDA's planned changes in the guidelines. Many reflect the view that the new guidelines would hamper the delivery of eyewear while providing no additional safety for consumers. The FDA is continuing to accept comments until April 24.

To view the comments as well as VM's extensive coverage of this story, visit the New & Noteworthy section of www.visionmonday.com. ■■

Vision West Inc. Launches "Going Green" Initiative for Its Members

OCEANSIDE, Calif.—Vision West Inc. (VWI) has announced the company's commitment to eco-friendly business practices starting in 2008.

The group will launch a 'Going Green' initiative, developing for the buying group arena a program with what it calls Eye-Eco Premium Vendor programs, to help independent eyecare providers save more money in their practices.

Joseph Mallinger, OD, CEO of VWI said, "Our 'green initiative' is in keeping with our company's 20-year history of serving the independent eyecare practitioner. We are very grateful and proud to be affiliated with our sponsoring Eye-Eco Premium Vendor Partners."

The first 'green' cause in the yearlong program is to help reduce pollution caused by plastic bags. Vision West developed its own environmentally friendly, reusable Eco-Tote that will be distributed to all VWI members.

The Eco-Tote is sponsored by Carl Zeiss Vision, Empire Optical, Essilor,

Hilco, ClearVision, Odyssey, Rudy Project and WileyX.

According to Cathy Ives, VWI's sales and marketing manager, "The days of plastic bags are over. With this Eco-Tote, our members can take part in 'saving the planet, one bag at a time' by helping to keep plastic bags out of the landfills and oceans."

Ives told VM, "Our focus this year is 'Goin Green, Makin' Green and Savin' Green. Throughout the year we'll be proving savings tips that are also good for the environment. And we'll be launching a national campaign, 'Take the Eye Eco Challenge.'"

VWI and its Eye-Eco Premium Vendors are also sponsoring educational events. The group just did a four-city practice management series in California with Williams and has added CE for optometrists through Southern California College of Optometry on VWI's Web site, a program which will be expanded.

Through 2008, VWI will provide its members with valuable information on

recycling and reducing waste in the practice, to add more profits to the optical office.

VWI is a leading optical purchasing group for independent ECPs and is officially endorsed as the Preferred Buying Group of the California Optometric Association, as well as state associations in Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, New York, Maine, and other vision care groups in the U.S. VWI actively supports the independent eyecare profession through financial contributions to its affiliated state associations. ■■



Vision West's new Eco-Tote is one of several ways VWI will be helping its members contribute to a sustainable environment.

Luxottica Re-Launches LuxandMe.com

PORT WASHINGTON, N.Y.—Luxottica Group (NYSE:LUX) has added new features and relaunched LuxandMe.com.

The newly re-designed site is full of rich information available exclusively to Luxottica's customers. Within the site, ECPs will find information on practice management, marketing tools, current promotions, merchandising, product trends, company news and other dedicated initiatives to the growth of their business.

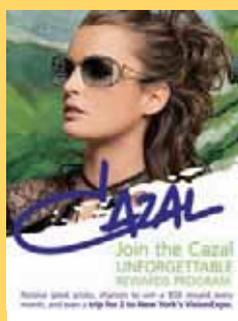
In addition, Luxottica University is an area dedicated to learning, where ECPs will find education programs including continue education courses, webinars, seminars, brand and product info.

"The new content of LuxandMe.com

is designed to empower our partners with the information they need to grow their business as well as prepare them to serve the demands of the new consumer," said Pierre Fay, executive vice president, Luxottica Wholesale N.A. He added, "The site represents Luxottica's way of working together to create the best possible relationship with our customers and affiliates."

In 2007, Luxottica introduced a range of new tools such as "Lux", the dedicated customer newsletter, the Trend Report that forecasts key trends in eyewear for the upcoming season, and online training and learning tools. Luxandme.com houses these resources. ■■

ESE Announces Cazal Winners



ELMONT, N.Y.—Eastern States Eyewear (ESE) named the winners of their Cazal Eyewear "Unforgettable Rewards" Promotion.

The Grand Prize winner of a trip for two to New York during April's Vision Expo East is Les Varin of DBA Pearle in Rochester, N.Y. The first runner up, Rox-

ana Williams of Kirkland Vision in Kirkland, Wash., won a digital camera and the second runner up, and winner of a \$200 American Express Gift Certificate, was Eric Katsev of E&P Pearle in Brooklyn, N.Y.

"We would like to congratulate all the winners of the Cazal Unforgettable Rewards Program," said Paul Shyer, president of ESE. "The promotion was a great success and it helped to show just how strong Cazal can be for our customers. We look forward to continuing to promote the brand with fresh and exciting ideas." ■■

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NEWS VIEWS

CooperVision.tv Resource Premieres on Web



FAIRPORT, N.Y.—CooperVision [NYSE: COO] has launched a new online resource to help patients learn more about contact lens care and the technologies behind CooperVision's contact lenses. Called, CooperVision.tv,

which can be found online at cooper-vision.tv, it is specifically designed as a resource for eyecare practitioners to use with their patients to further their understanding of contact lens wear and care techniques and explain the technologies behind CooperVision's broad contact lens portfolio.

The service is the first of its kind in the contact lens industry, CooperVision said, and requires no registration or fee to use it.

"CooperVision believes the prescriber should be in control of the information patients receive about their contact lenses and wearing options, which is why we've designed this resource to help practitioners tune their patients into the important

issues related to contact lens wear and new technologies," said Mark Bertolin, vice president of technology and development, CooperVision. "The use of videos helps practitioners explain complex contact lens technologies to their patients in a simple, fun, and effective format."

After patients are fitted in CooperVision contact lenses, eyecare practitioners can review the instructional videos with their patients in the office or provide them with a link that will allow them to reach CooperVision.tv at home, in the office, or anywhere with access to a computer with a high-speed Internet connection. Practitioners can also include the Web site link on appointment cards, e-mail newsletters, and electronic recalls

as a way to ensure that patients are aware of the information available to them. ECPs can access CooperVision.tv directly or via the secure Web site reserved for practitioners on www.coopervision.com.

CooperVision.tv is the latest online resource from CooperVision which also offers The CooperVision Online Learning Center, created in partnership with the Contact Lens Society of America, offering practitioners a free training, continuing education, and information resource. The secure online customer service center, MyCooperVision, offers services designed to increase office efficiency and help practitioners build a practice. ■

REM Eyewear Establishes European Subsidiary

BARCELONA Spain—REM Eyewear has established a new wholly-owned subsidiary, REM Eyewear Europe, SL.

The Barcelona facility, including a new customer service center and showroom here, is intended to further grow the company's portfolio of brands, including Converse, John Varvatos, Lucky Brand and Cosmopolitan, among others, in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA). The new initiative will also facilitate improved and expanded services for its customers, while allowing REM to respond to the market's needs more rapidly, according to a statement from the Sun Valley, Calif.-based company.

"Establishing ourselves on the ground in Europe is a vital move forward for our

globalization strategy," said Mike Hundert, REM president and CEO. "Fashion and lifestyle brands looking to align themselves with top design and brand-building talent also need a savvy partner who has resources to reach consumers in every major market. We have that vision and ability, and we're executing it."

The opening of REM Europe concludes the company's year-long series of globalization tactics that began last spring with the hiring of Daniel Lai as sales director for Asia, the opening of REM Australia, a joint venture with General Optical, in Sydney in July, the wholly-owned REM Asia in Hong Kong in September and the appointment of Mauro Schena to direct its efforts in the EMEA region in October. ■

Silhouette Optical Breaks Ground on New Learning Center

COLONIE, N.Y.—Silhouette Optical, the U.S. distribution subsidiary of Silhouette International, has broken ground for the building of a new learning center located here.

According to the company, construction on the new building will be finished in the Fall of 2008. Upon completion, the facility will house a working retail and eyecare center where Silhouette will test new concepts in providing a unique and comprehensive experience for eyewear consumers, before introducing them to the company's independent optical and retail partners throughout the 100 countries where its products are sold.

"Silhouette's success is dependent on the success of our independent optical practitioners. If we learn to serve them better through the experience we gain at

this facility and make the results available to our partners, we will all benefit," said Chris Juergens, president of Silhouette Optical. "Creating a retail environment owned by Silhouette will provide us with a better perspective on the challenges our customers face."

"The independent professionals who sell our products are always looking for new ways to enhance their customers' experiences," continued Juergens. "In the competitive environment in which our industry exists, we want to do what we can to help them continue to be successful."

The location was chosen due to its proximity to Silhouette Optical's distribution headquarters in Green Island, N.Y., which will allow for closer observation and more efficient operational review of the new facility, according to Silhouette. ■

Ocuco Group Makes First Acquisition on the Continent

PARIS—Ocuco Group, based in Ireland, recently acquired Aspe SII, a well-known French optical retail software firm, for an undisclosed sum. Joel Aspe, founder of Aspe SII, remains president of the company.

With the acquisition, Ocuco is now the largest software company in its sector outside the U.S. with over 5,650 sites using its software worldwide and 90 staff members. Its flagship product Acuitas Enterprise is run in Vision Express' 200 stores, which is owned by the French

company Grand Vision, and features full centralization of patient records and EPoS information. The Ocuco offering also includes software for managing optical labs, ophthalmology clinics, and pharmacies.

Aspe SII is known in France for its software for opticians, dentists and audiologists, and because of its positioning within the private medical insurance organizations

This acquisition allows Ocuco to be present on this market with our offering, while expanding the business portfolio of Aspe SII,"
—Leo Mac Canna, Ocuco Group

in France, a key market niche for which it has become a leader. This is a strategic move for the Ocuco Group, which is planning a global expansion of its business, having made four acquisitions in the

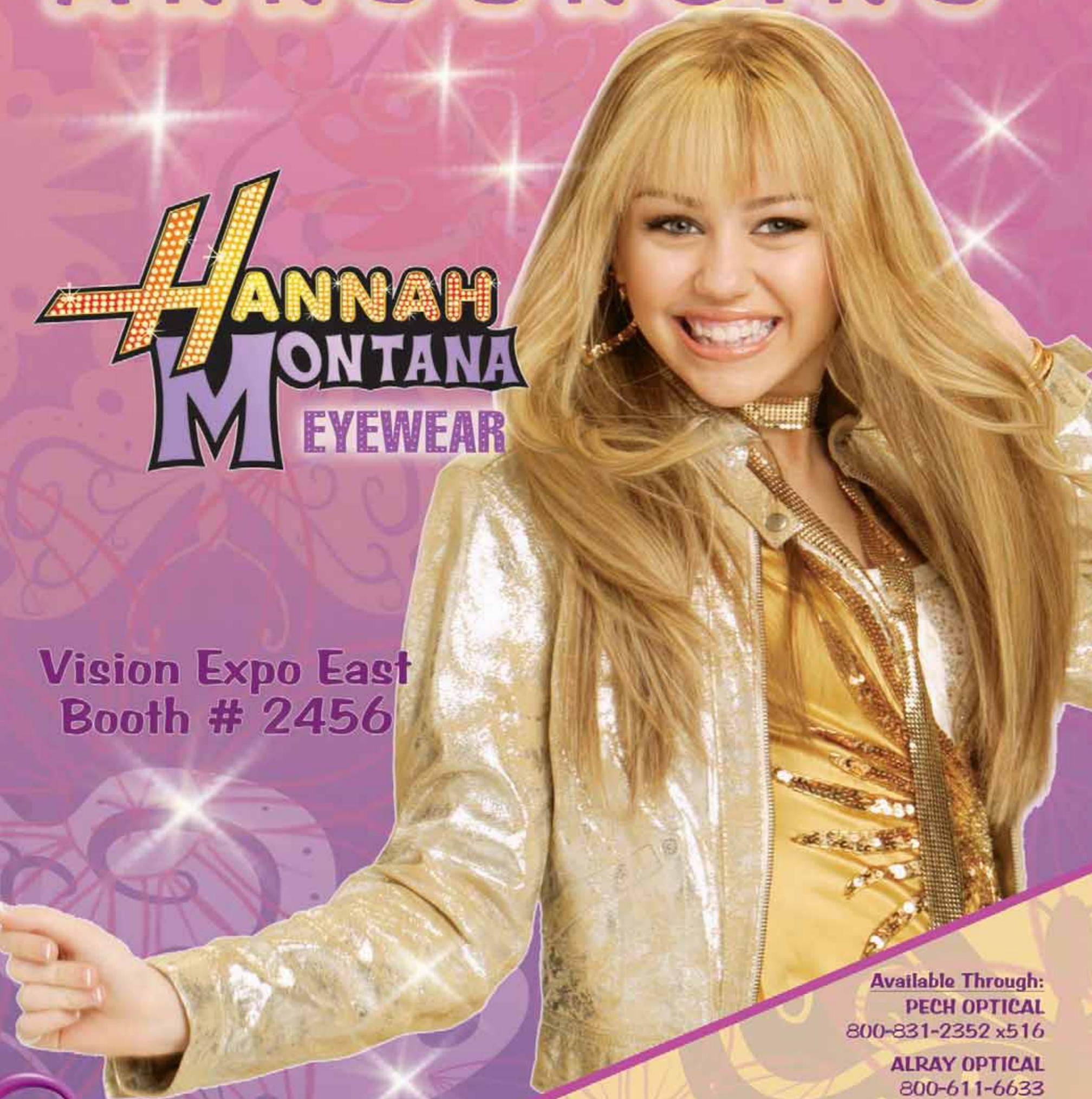
past two years in the U.K. and in the U.S.

"France is the third largest optical retail market in Europe. A company aiming at being the global leader in fields relating to optics has to be present in France. This acquisition allows Ocuco to be present on this market with our offering, while expanding the business portfolio of Aspe SII, an existing company with an invaluable level of expertise and know-how that can be deployed across the whole Group," said Leo Mac Canna, Ocuco Group's CEO. ■

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ESCADA'S BRAND HISTORY

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ESCADA TODAY

Over thirty years later, ESCADA has evolved into a leading worldwide fashion house. With its headquarters based in Munich, Germany, ESCADA has 15 signature stores in the U.S. and is sold in several high end department stores across the country.

ESCADA's objective is to offer more than a designer product to its clientele – genuine products that are investment pieces providing longevity. ESCADA is targeted to fashion-oriented women who are seeking high quality and exquisite details along with superior workmanship and a comfortable fit. The ESCADA woman is sophisticated and cosmopolitan, and leads an elegant and luxurious lifestyle. She gravitates towards timeless and classic fashions that allow her to express her sensuality and femininity. As luxury eyewear has seen promising growth in recent years, ESCADA's eyewear collection is ideally positioned to satisfy the ESCADA woman's needs.

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Style: VES 121S

THE ESCADA EYEWEAR COLLECTION

For Spring/Summer 2008, the ESCADA Eyewear Collection takes its inspiration from ESCADA's 1980's heritage, with styles that embody bright colors and exotic surroundings. The collection expresses her inner strength and her daring character with a variety of key elements that are signature to the ESCADA brand. These include ESCADA's well-known double 'E' logo, which is enriched by small stones and featured on the leather temples; the smooth metal double 'E' bracelet, which is featured on the endpieces of the sun collection and embellished by tone on tone stones or delicate enamel; the chain, which has been incorporated into the sunglass collection, becomes a structure of the temple for a simple double bridge pilot and a very rich edge that makes for an ultra feminine shield; and the precious globe button with logo, which features a stitching effect and is used to create a plastic and metal sunglass.



Style: SES 633

The frames in the ESCADA Eyewear Collection exude the confidence and lifestyle that are central to the ESCADA woman's appeal. Each style is distinctly timeless, yet perfectly suited for the modern woman's lifestyle. As the brand forges ahead as a leading global luxury brand, ESCADA is poised to fulfill the lifestyle needs of contemporary women around the world. For more information, please call 800.345.VIVA or go to www.vivagroup.com.

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NEWS VIEWS

Vera Wang Renews With Kenmark Group Through 2012

LOUISVILLE, Kent. — Vera Wang, Ltd. and Kenmark Group have renewed their licensing agreement for Vera Wang eyewear and sunwear.

Under the agreement, Couteur Designs, a division of the Kenmark Group, will continue to design, manufacture and distribute Vera Wang Eyewear and Sunwear. The renewal extends the contract for five more years, through 2012.

“Eyewear is a competitive fashion category,” said Susan Sokol, president of Vera Wang Apparel, “It is a key accessory and completes a look. Kenmark has a



strong understanding of our brand and translates the Vera Wang vision into eyewear. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Kenmark Group.”

“Renewing our contract with Vera Wang reinforces Kenmark’s commitment to provide a top women’s designer brand for our loyal customers,” said Don Howard, president and CEO of the Kenmark Group. “We look forward to further collaboration with Vera Wang as one of America’s top designers, to create fashion forward designs that

make women look beautiful.”

Vera Wang Eyewear is available at select optical stores and boutiques worldwide. Vera Wang Sunwear is available at fine luxury apparel venues such as Bergdorf Goodman and select optical boutiques.

Vera Wang Group designs, markets and distributes collections of women’s ready-to-wear, Lavender Label, bridal and maids apparel under the Vera Wang name. Vera Wang Licensing LLC, the licensing division of the company, has selectively granted licenses for the manufacture and distribution of fragrance and beauty-related products (Coty Prestige, Inc.), eyewear (Couteur Designs, a division of the Kenmark Group), china, crystal, silver and gifts (Wedgwood), Vera Wang suite (Halekulani Hotel), fine papers (William Arthur), intimate apparel

(Charles Komar & Sons) and mattresses (Serta Mattress Company). In addition, *Vera Wang on Weddings* was published by Harper Collins in 2001. In 2007, the company partnered with Kohl’s to launch Simply Vera Wang. For more information on Vera Wang, please visit the company’s Web site at www.verawang.com.

Kenmark Group has been serving the eyewear market for 35 years. Couteur Designs, a division of the Kenmark Group, features designer eyewear by Vera Wang, Jhane Barnes, Dana Buchman, Lilly Pulitzer and Cynthia Rowley. Branded collections from Kenmark include: República, Thalia, Timex, Hush Puppies, Wolverine and house collections. For a complete offering of eyewear and sun styles, visit www.kenmarkoptical.com. ■

McGee Group Signs License Pact With Sally Hansen

MARIETTA, Ga.—The McGee Group has signed an exclusive five-year license agreement to manufacture and market Sally Hansen Eyewear with Sally Hansen, a division of Del Laboratories, a subsidiary of Coty, Inc. Sally Hansen is a nail color and nail care manufacturer that produces head to toe beauty treatment products.

“Fashion and color are important when it comes to eyewear and cosmetics,” said Wayne McGee, CEO and president of The McGee Group. “We are taking those elements and creating fashionable eyewear in seasonal colors for women like Sally Hansen does through their prod-

ucts. This is how you develop new categories in eyewear and inspire innovation. It is a natural fit to partner with a brand that has such a strong heritage and popularity at the retail level. We couldn’t be more thrilled to be working with such a prestigious company like Del Laboratories and its Sally Hansen division.”

“This is an ideal partnership,” said Bill Boraczek, senior vice president of Sally Hansen marketing. “McGee is a leader in the industry with impeccable quality and design. Combined with Sally Hansen color expertise and brand personality, you get a line of eyewear that is functional and fashionable. Timely and timeless.

That is what Sally Hansen is about.”

The new Sally Hansen designs will be fun and feminine and are currently being developed. The collection is scheduled to hit the market in May 2008 along with a national advertising campaign that will reflect the Sally Hansen image which will appear in conjunction with Sally Hansen products in teen, fashion and beauty, and trade publications. The Sally Hansen eyewear collection will feature coordinating cases in their signature color pallet and will target teens and women of all ages who want products they can trust, McGee told VM. ■

TLC Vision Posts \$43.5 Million Loss in FY 2007

ST. LOUIS—Refractive surgery firm TLC Vision (Nasdaq: TLCV) had a consolidated net loss of \$43.5 million in its 2007 fiscal year, compared to net income of \$11.5 million in FY 2006.

The 2007 loss included non-cash charges of \$12.5 million related to the company’s investment in Occulogix, as well as \$21 million in restructuring charges.

The company’s net revenues last year reached \$298.4 million, up 7.4 percent.

In 2007’s fourth quarter, TLC Vision’s net loss was \$25.3 million, increased from a \$2.4 million loss in the prior year’s Q4. The loss in 2007’s fourth quarter included non-cash charges of \$6.6 million related to the company’s investment in Occulogix, plus \$6.5 million in

restructuring charges.

Revenues in Q4 rose 5.7 percent to \$36.3 million.

Jim Wachtman, TLC Vision’s president and chief executive officer, commented, “While we are concerned about the current trends in the overall consumer economy, we remain encouraged about TLC’s market position and strategy and believe that the steps we have taken throughout 2007 will continue to drive increased market penetration and above-average industry growth going forward.”

Added Wachtman, “During 2007 and the first quarter of 2008, we not only successfully repositioned 54 of our centers to our new refractive strategy, we also significantly increased consumer awareness of

the TLC brand in the marketplace.” He said the company anticipates that same-store procedure volume will show absolute growth well in excess of industry levels in Q1, and that revenues in that period will be approximately \$89 million.

A company announcement noted that TLC Vision completed the sale of its interest in the Oxford Eye Surgery Center, Oxford, Miss., on Dec. 31. Combined with the sale of its Midland, Texas, ambulatory surgery center—sold in the third quarter—and the recently announced sale of its interest in the Rockland Surgery Center in Wilmington, Del., the number of stand-alone ambulatory surgery centers in the company’s portfolio has been reduced to five. ■

Signature Eyewear Sees Sales, Net Income Slip in Q1

INGLEWOOD, Calif.—Signature Eyewear (OTC BB: SEYE.OB) had declines in both net sales and net income in its first fiscal quarter ended Jan. 31.

The company’s sales fell 7.3 percent, to \$5.6 million, in the quarter, according to Signature’s 10K report, filed March 18 with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Net income for the period was \$150,000, down from net income of \$154,000 in the prior year’s Q1.

Noting that this year’s first quarter was the company’s 13th consecutive quarter of profitability, chief executive officer Michael Prince said, “Although our net income was about the same in each of the quarters, approximately one-half of our net income in Q1 2007 was due to an income tax-benefit from the decrease in the valuation allowance on our deferred tax asset.”

Prince said Signature’s Laura Ashley Eyewear line experienced 27.8 percent growth in this year’s Q1. The company’s other primary lines—listed as bebe eyes, Nicole Miller Eyewear and “other”—saw their sales drop by 2.1 percent, 1.2 percent and 29.1 percent, respectively, in Q1, according to the SEC filing. ■

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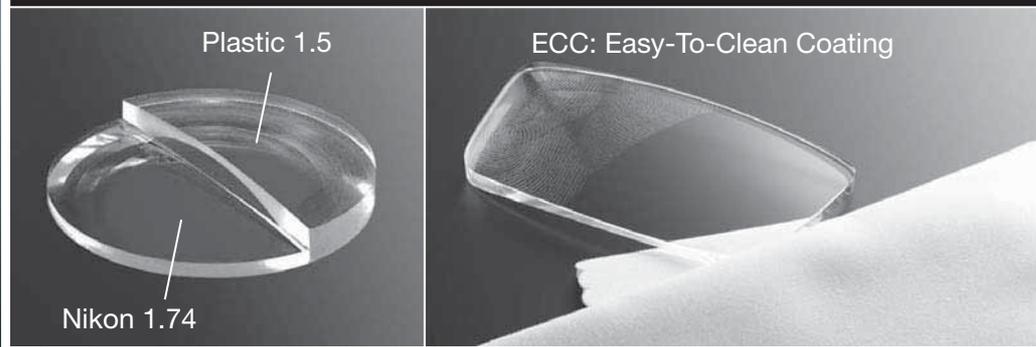
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NEWS VIEWS

Luxottica Posts Drop in Q4 Income

MILAN—The expenses involved in integrating Oakley's operations, acquired for \$2.1 billion last June, led Luxottica Group (NYSE: LUX) to post its first decline in quarterly profits in the past nine quarters for fiscal 2007's Q4. However, its income for the full year rose 14.3 percent, to a record €492 million, the company said last week.

For the fourth quarter, Luxottica's consolidated net income was €97 million, 4 percent below the same period in FY 2006. Operating income for the company's retail division was off 31.7 percent in Q4, to €59 million, while its wholesale division saw its operating income rise 5.5 percent to €110 million.

In the full year 2007, Luxottica's retail division had operating income of €362 million, 16.2 percent below FY 2006; its

wholesale division's operating income rose 18.4 percent to €528 million.

As previously reported, Luxottica's consolidated net sales for FY 2007 were just under €5 billion, up 6.2 percent at constant currency rates; sales in Q4 rose 7.1 percent at constant currency rates, to €1.2 billion.

Looking at the company's full-year performance, Luxottica's chief executive officer, Andrea Guerra, said, "With respect to North America, we are especially pleased with the performance of our overall business in that market, which posted a 6 percent growth in sales in U.S. dollars for the year. In particular, the performance of the retail division in that market was satisfactory, especially when compared with that of other comparable leading retailers in that market."

"During the first two months of the current year, our wholesale business is showing growth in all markets worldwide, while the retail business remains steady overall."

—Andrea Guerra, Luxottica



As for results so far in 2008, Guerra said, "During the first two months of the current year, our wholesale business is showing growth in all markets worldwide, while the retail business remains steady overall. With respect to the Oakley business, we continue to be extremely pleased with the speed at which we are completing many strategic projects. Going forward, we are expecting that this business will contribute the most during the second and third quarters of the year, when it has historically enjoyed

its strongest positive seasonality."

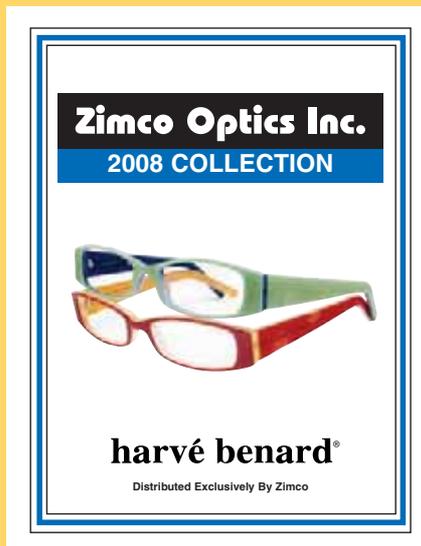
Last week, Luxottica's board authorized a stock repurchase program for up to 18.5 million of the company's stock, representing 4 percent of outstanding shares. That authorization "is intended to provide the company with treasury shares in order to efficiently manage the company's capital and to implement the performance share plan to be granted to the group's top managers," an announcement said. ■

Zimco Optics Celebrates 30th Anniversary

BROOKLYN, N.Y.—Zimco Optics, direct importers of eyeglass frames and prescription lenses, will be celebrating 30 years in the optical business in April.

Allen Zimberg, Zimco's CEO, founded the company on April 10, 1978 with six employees. Today, Zimco has 35 employees who's mission is to provide "Style, Quality and Good Delivery" at the very best prices.

Family owned and operated—Zimberg's son, Mitchell Zimberg is the president of Zimco Optics, while Zimberg's wife Joan is part owner—the business started in a 5,000 square foot building and in four years, due to increasing volume, moved to a larger,



25,000 square foot building at their current location in Brooklyn, N.Y.

"When I started this business, I never imagined the extent of our achievements, including expanding our designer collections and selling worldwide," said Zimberg. "The past 30 years have brought me fulfillment and has totally enriched my life. In the past 30 years, more and more frame importers have come on to the scene. This makes us work even harder to expand our market."

The company will be having a special employee party to celebrate 30 years in business.

"We look forward to continued growth over the next number of years," said Zimberg. ■

Hoya Names Rook Director of Sales, Western Region



LEWISVILLE, Texas—Hoya Vision Care, North America, has appointed Greg Rook director of distributor sales in the company's Western region, according to an announcement from the company.

Rook has 22 years of experience in sales and marketing in both executive and account management positions. Most recently he served as vice president of sales and marketing for Polycore USA in the Americas. ■

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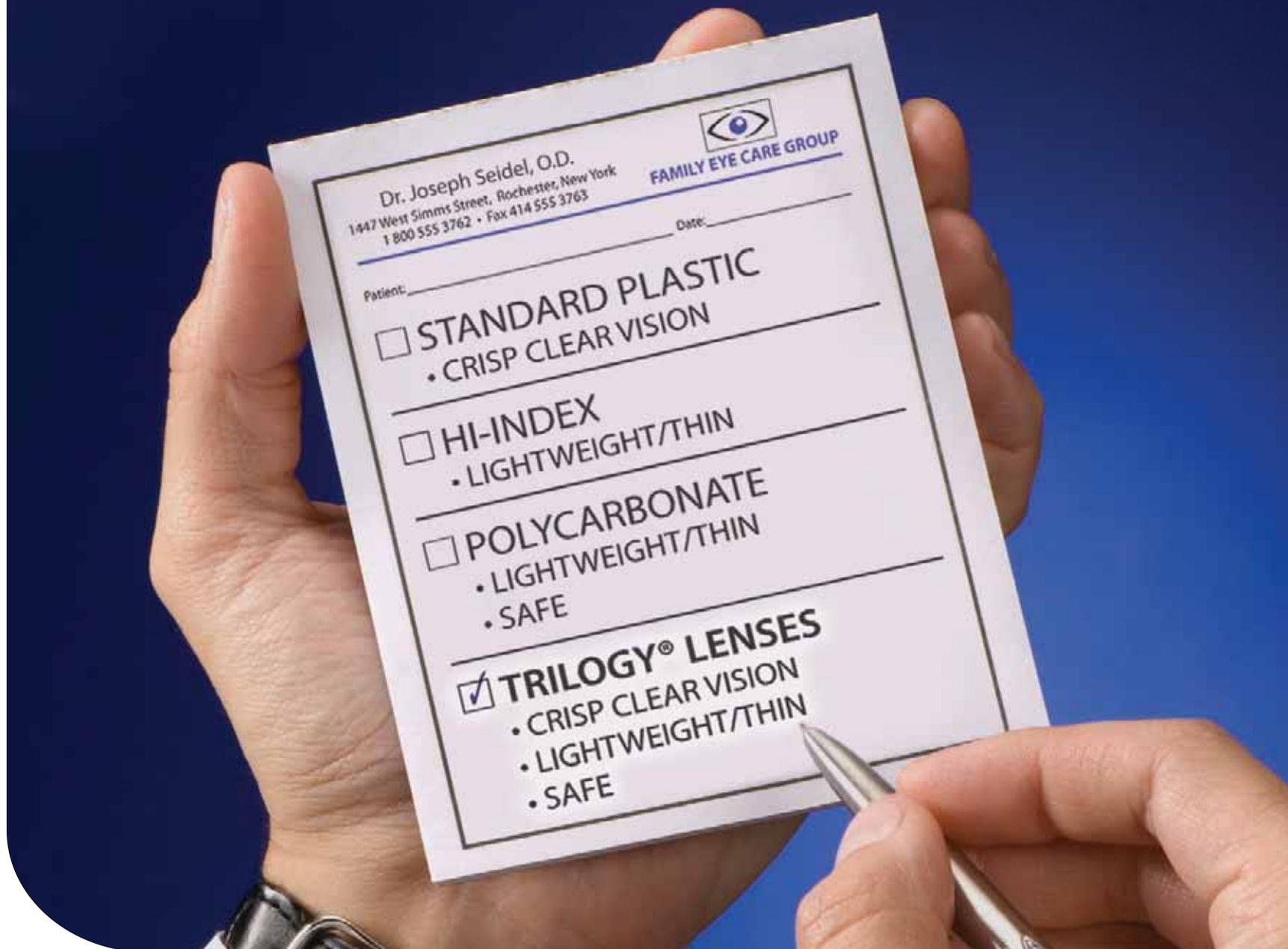
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NEWS VIEWS

Gerber and Rothstein Form Global Impact Group

CARDIFF-BY-THE-SEA, Calif.—Two optical industry veterans, from the worlds of product development and visual merchandising, are merging their talents and have formed a new company, Global Impact Group (GIG) to work with optical retailers and eyewear suppliers to enhance product development and product presentation to consumers.

GIG owners, Bill Gerber and Marc Rothstein, have a combined experience of more than 40 years in the optical industry. In their new partnership, Gerber will be focusing on creative development and sales, while Rothstein will work on sourcing, manufacturing oversight and organizing the enterprise's extensive network of suppliers and designers around the world.

Stated Gerber, "We've launched Global Impact Group in order to grow the industry. We believe the potential exists to double the size of the industry by 20/20—with a philosophy of 'growth

through exceptional design,' GIG is in a unique position to help the industry achieve this."

Added Gerber, "The industry is mostly failing to get across and communicate the wonders of the optical world on a grand scale and that's a shame. Ninety percent of optical presentation today is horrendously lame and we've got to change that. It's all about bettering the customer experience and we can help with product development and presentation. This industry is unique and has amazing potential because of fashion, technology and tens of millions of devoted, open-minded consumers. So, we exist to help bridge the gap between supply and demand."

Gerber, 43, was vice president sales and marketing at Neostyle Eyewear for 10 years. After seeing a void in eyewear merchandising practices, he founded Delectable Display in 1997 where he worked with retailers and supplier com-



Bill Gerber, left, and Marc Rothstein, right, will bring their creativity and sourcing experience to a new firm that will focus on new visual concepts for product development, communications and presentation.

panies inside and outside the industry. He sold Delectable Display two years ago and has been working on "a number of cutting edge projects for big players around the globe," he said.

Rothstein, 42, was born into the eyewear industry, as his father, Nathan Rothstein, began his career in the world

of optics in the early 1960s.

Rothstein has worked in the design and manufacturing of optical frames and sunwear for companies around the world and has served in executive roles at Kenmark and Foster Grant, among other projects specializing in product development and sourcing with a number of leading eyewear firms.

Currently, Global Impact Group is working with several major eyewear suppliers and two of the four largest retailers in the U.S., the partners said. "We are targeting large suppliers and retailers, as they can have the largest impact on driving growth. However, we take on a few smaller strategic projects in order to keep it close to the street," said Rothstein. One of GIG's current projects is a demonstrator for polarized and anti-reflective lenses.

The partners' new Web site, www.globalimpactgig.com, is going live this month. ■

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So this is how we create here; writing crooked not straight lines, because we know that innovation is different work for every brand, and ours are for those that believe in that philosophy

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NEWS VIEWS

Pearle Europe Enters Pact for Stores in India

MONTE CARLO—Pearle Europe recently entered into an agreement with Reliance Retail, a subsidiary of Reliance Industries, a large private-sector company located in India, to establish a joint venture between the two companies for the Indian optical market.

The agreement was announced by Pearle Europe parent HAL Holding, which owns 97 percent of the chain. The transaction is expected to be completed in a few months.

Reliance Retail currently operates more than 500 stores across India in various retailing categories.

“The joint venture has the long term ambition to become a market-leading optical retailer in India,” according to an announcement by parent company HAL Holding. ■■

Eichelberger Launches N.A. Vision

WRENTHAM, Mass.—Dave “Ike” Eichelberger, a 30-year industry veteran, has launched North American Vision Associates, a totally integrated practice management company focused on growing the independents’ optical business through employee training, proper partnering with vendors, and improved business acumen.

“Unlike consulting companies, we are hands on working with the independent to produce and execute a yearly business plan. We focus on better business acumen, offering higher end differentiated products, multiple pair sales, and proper partnering with vendors,” said Eichelberger.

He also added that by truly partnering with a select group of vendors, and working closely with the vendor/partner relationship, a more thorough knowledge of the best products for vision will be accomplished.

“Helping with vendor relationships, marketing, advertising, positioning of the business, and most important helping to teach the dispensers how to offer the best technology and products for

vision. This results in better profit for the business owner, a better work environment for the employees and the best eyewear experience for the patients.

For the independent to compete, remain strong and to even survive against not only the big players but even their own over competitive marketplace they will need some “professional” help, according to Eichelberger.

NAVA is unique in that it takes a hands-on approach through a minimum of 15 on-site visits per year supplemented by vendor visits that are controlled by NAVA, Eichelberger said. “By reviewing the clients business plan with the selected vendors there is buy in from all parties.”

Eichelberger started in the industry with Univis a frame and lens manufacturer and has also worked for companies such as Essilor and Hoya North America.

North American Vision Associates will be working with a limited number of clients during the early stages focusing their efforts in the Northeast, but

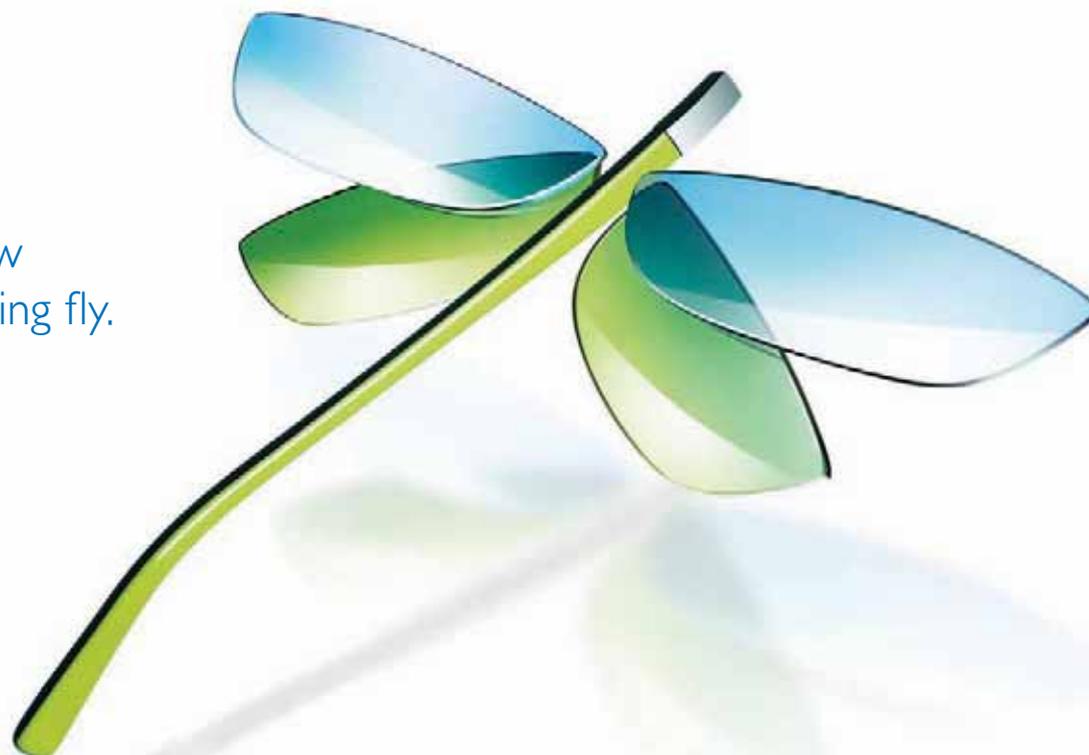
expansion to other areas is planned in the future. For more information call: (508) 384-5733 or e-mail deichelberger@navaus.com ■■

AAO Web Site Gets High Marks

SAN FRANCISCO—The American Academy of Ophthalmology’s (AAO) Web site, www.aao.org, ranked first among the most useful research sites by ophthalmologists, according to data gathered by PERQ/HCI in the 2007 Media-Chek Eyecare study.

The Academy’s site was noted as the most useful site by 24 percent of those surveyed, more than double the responses for its nearest competitor. The site was also selected as most useful by users with a high-volume practice or a surgical practice, as well as those aged 45 and younger, according to the AAO. ■■

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NEWS VIEWS

Vision-Ease Launches Sustainability Initiative

RAMSEY, Minn.—Vision-Ease Lens (VEL) is reducing its carbon footprint and setting new sustainability standards for lens manufacturers. Starting March 1, VEL began manufacturing all products at its Ramsey, Minn.-facility with 100 percent renewable energy. This effort builds on significant conservation and recycling efforts that VEL has had in place over the past several years, and sets the stage for a long-term, corporate-wide initiative.

“Consumers are in general becoming more eco-minded. With that, manufacturers and industrial companies are also aiding in overall sustainability efforts,” said Doug Hepper, president and CEO, VEL.

“Reducing Vision-Ease Lens carbon emissions as a manufacturer translates directly to customers. With a number of lens

“Consumers are in general becoming more eco-minded. With that, manufacturers and industrial companies are also aiding in overall sustainability efforts.”

—Doug Hepper



styles, colors and brands, customers now have another, more important factor to consider when purchasing lenses—the environmental impact of the products they choose.”

Beyond setting a new standard in the lens industry, VEL commitment to sustainability marks one of the largest industrial companies with 100 percent renewable energy in Minnesota.

“We will pay a premium to use renewable energy, but the benefits far outweigh the cost,” said Hepper. “By switching to renewable power, we will

avoid the release of more than 15,000 metric tons of carbon emissions each year. This saving is equivalent to the emissions that result from burning more than one and three-quarter million gallons of gasoline.”

Through Connexus Energy, an electric distribution cooperative, all energy purchased for the Ramsey, Minn.-based facility is generated through renewable power including wind, solar, hydroelectric and biomass.

In addition to the conversion to renewable power, VEL has already engaged in a number of other eco-friendly initiatives. By eliminating extra

product shipments for manufacturing, VEL saved more than 12,500 gallons of gas in 2006 by producing its proprietary, award winning LifeRx photochromic lenses in one facility. This has also saved 113 metric tons of CO₂ emissions—equivalent to the electricity for 15 homes for one year, according to VEL. By replacing all lighting in the Ramsey facility with energy efficient fluorescent lighting, the company said its savings have reached near 800 metric tons of CO₂ emissions since the conversion in January 2007. ■

Gerber Scientific Posts Gains for 3Q 2007

SOUTH WINDSOR, Conn.—Gerber Scientific (NYSE:GRB) reported net income of \$3.1 million for the third quarter of fiscal 2008 on revenue of \$152.0 million, compared with net income of \$2.2 million on revenue of \$137.1 million for the third quarter of fiscal 2007. Foreign currency translation had the effect of increasing revenue by approximately \$9.6 million in the third quarter of fiscal 2008 as compared with the third quarter of fiscal 2007.

For the nine months ended Jan. 31,

2008, Gerber Scientific reported net income of \$8.4 million on revenue of \$466.3 million, compared with net income of \$7.9 million on revenue of \$419.7 million for the nine months ended Jan. 31, 2007. Foreign currency translation had the effect of increasing revenue by approximately \$24.2 million for the nine months ended Jan. 31, 2008, as compared with the nine months ended Jan. 31, 2007.

The company did not break out results for its Gerber Coburn optical division. ■

Sàfilo to Introduce New Expo Booth

PARSIPPANY, N.J.— Sàfilo USA, will unveil its newly designed trade show environment at the upcoming Vision Expo East. In Sàfilo's signature dark blue and white color scheme, the new booth—designed by Sparks Exhibits and Environments, Inc. of Philadelphia, Pa.—will offer a modern and clean look, accord-



ing to Sàfilo. The new space will deliver a high impact entertainment experience that incorporates powerful brand imagery within the confines of several work stations, meeting rooms and casual seating areas.

Just beyond the booth's entrance, guests will enter a bar and lounge area filled with plasma screens and an extensive 25-foot tall media wall. The wall features a combination of low and high resolution displays creating a unique and immersive experience. Several times a day, the plasma screens sink into the platform behind the bar, creating an elevated runway for the signature Sàfilo designer fashion show.

"We're very excited about our new booth environment at Vision Expo East. This innovative, high impact booth not only better represents who we are today as a company but also better serves the needs of our customers which is extremely important to us," said Dick Russo, executive vice president of Sàfilo USA. ■



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NEWS VIEWS

Marcolin Signs Agreement for Dsquared2 Eyewear

MILAN—The Marcolin Group SpA (MCL.MI), Dean and Dan Caten, designers of the brand Dsquared2, and Staff International Spa, licensee of the brand Dsquared2, have announced an exclusive five-year licensing agreement for the production and worldwide distribution of sunglasses and ophthalmic frames under the Dsquared2 brand name.

The agreement, which is renewable for another five-year term at its conclusion, marks Dsquared2's debut in the eyewear market and is projected to generate a turnover of approximately \$20 million once established, according to a joint statement from the companies. The launch of the first sunglass collection is planned for the first half of 2009 and will be followed by prescription frames.

Dsquared2, a ready-to-wear line which describes itself as a mix of the American dream and refined Italian tailoring paired with attention to details and an ironic and provocative image,

was launched in 1994 by designers Dean and Dan Caten. The Dsquared2 Eyewear line will have selective distribution and be positioned in the high-end segment of the market offering styles for both men and women.

"I'm very satisfied for Marcolin Group's opportunity to launch a brand such as Dsquared2 in the eyewear industry," said Maurizio Marcolin, style and licensing officer of the Marcolin Group. "Dean and Dan Caten's great potential and stylistic talent, combined with the high market appreciation for this brand, will ensure an extreme success over the years, thanks to the synergy of Marcolin's high quality standards and Dsquared2's unique creativity."

"We are pleased to work with Marcolin because we believe that, from a creative perspective, they are the most innovative group on the market, able to distinctly diversify the brands of their portfolio and devote all the efforts nec-

essary to support a project as important as this," said Dean and Dan Caten. "We are extremely happy that Marcol-

in decided to invest in our brand for its notoriety and also for its tremendous potential." ■■

A.T. Cross Company to Acquire Native Eyewear Inc.

LINCOLN, R.I.—A.T. Cross Company (Amex: ATX) the parent company of Costa Del Mar sunglasses as well as its line of A.T. Cross writing instruments, timepieces and accessories, announced that the company has entered into an agreement to acquire Native Eyewear Inc. for \$17.8 million, plus the assumption of approximately \$1 million in bank debt.

Native Eyewear, based in Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, is a designer and marketer of a branded line of "All Sports All Polarized" sunglasses called Native, which is distributed throughout the U.S.

under the Native Eyewear brand.

The transaction is expected to close on March 24, 2008.

A.T. Cross Company is a designer and marketer of branded personal and business accessories. Cross provides a range of products including award-winning quality writing instruments, timepieces, business accessories and Costa Del Mar sunglasses, which are distributed in retail and corporate gift channels worldwide. For more information, visit the A.T. Cross Web site at www.cross.com and the Costa Del Mar Web site at www.costadelmar.com. ■■

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ClearVision to Launch Expo Booth

HAPPAUGE, N.Y.—After nearly 24 months in development, ClearVision Optical is launching its new booth at this year's Vision Expo East. The booth will embody ClearVision's branding philosophy, conveying the company's "One Source" business approach with its talent for incorporating fun, innovation, and creativity, according to ClearVision.



Larger-than-life model graphics will blend with each brand's eyewear and sunglass selections, creating powerful fashion and lifestyle statements. ClearVision offers a wide selection of non-competitive adult and kids brands, including: BCBGMAXAZRIA, Cole Haan, Ellen Tracy, Izod Eyes, Op, Jessica McClintock and Fisher-Price, plus its own ClearVision house collection.

The booth will also feature a comfortable conversational lounge areas for guests to relax with friends and conduct business. To celebrate of the booth's launch, in conjunction with industry premier of Cole Haan Eyewear, the company is offering opportunities for free products, dispenser gifts, valuable extended payment terms, plus a full line of award winning POP and merchandising displays with show purchases.

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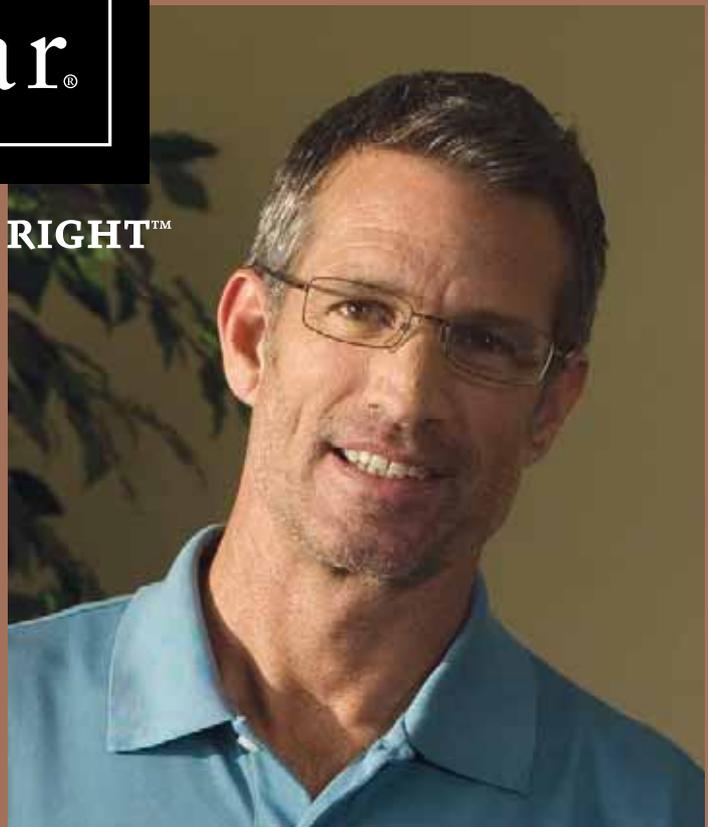
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Vision Market Virtually Flat in '07: VisionWatch

NEW YORK—The eyewear/eyecare industry's consolidated revenues—including dollar sales of key optical products as well as eye examination fees—declined by just 0.1 percent during calendar 2007. That left the total vision care market's volume of \$28,577.8 million for last year virtually even with the prior year's \$28,603.1 million in revenues, according to VisionWatch, the ongoing survey of 100,000 U.S. consumers annually, conducted by

Jobson Medical Information and the Vision Council of America.

Among industry's key product categories, frame dollar sales were also virtually flat, rising just 0.4 percent in the 12 months ended Dec. 31, 2007, according to the VisionWatch data. Lens dollar sales dipped by the same amount last year, coming in just 0.4 percent below 2006's industry lens revenues.

Among other vision-care products,

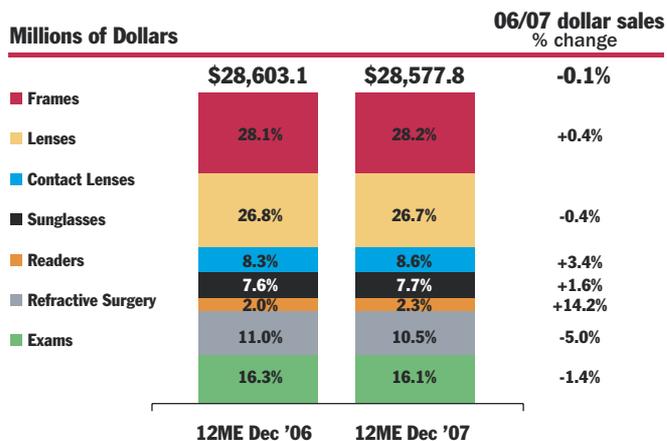
non-prescription readers showed the largest dollar sales gain among the VisionWatch survey respondents, with dollar sales rising by 14.2 percent during 2007. Contact lens dollar sales were up 3.4 percent for the year, while dollar sales of non-Rx sunglasses increased by 1.6 percent in calendar 2007.

The two eyecare categories that suffered declines in revenues last year were eye exams, down by 1.4 percent in the 12

months ended Dec. 31, and refractive surgery, whose revenues dipped 5 percent for the year. (The VisionWatch data indicates that 43.1 percent of U.S. adults aged 18 and over had an eye exam last year, down from 44.3 percent during 2006.)

Looking at dollar sales of specific product categories within the vision-care market, the VisionWatch survey indicates that independent optical retailers' *Continued on page 40*

Total Vision Care Market in the U.S.

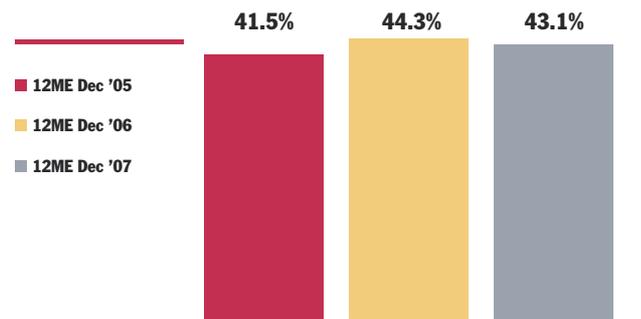


Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA
Total Annual VisionWatch Sample Size: 100,000 consumer respondents per year (ages 18+) Readers Data is for the 12ME (months ending) December 2005, 12ME December 2006, and the 12ME December 2007

Dollar sales of both ophthalmic frames and spectacle lenses showed little change last year from 2006's total volumes; frame sales rose just 0.4 percent for the year, while lens sales fell by the same amount. Showing the strongest gain in U.S. dollar sales in 2007—up 14.2 percent—was the Rx reader category.

Eye Exams

Percent of U.S. adults 18+ actually having eye exams

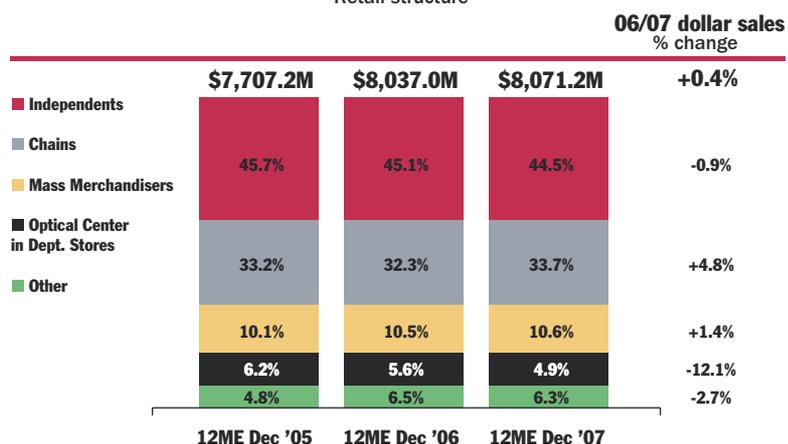


Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA

Just over 43 percent of U.S. residents aged 18 and older had an eye examination during the 12 months ended Dec. 31, 2007; that's down from the 44.3 percent who had exams during calendar 2006, but up from the 41.5 percent of Americans 18+ who had eye exams during 2005.

Frame Market - Dollars

Retail structure

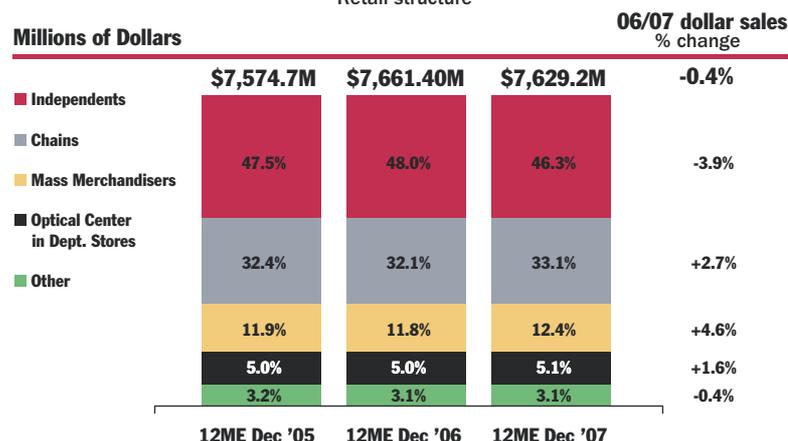


Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA

Frame dollar sales rose by 0.4 percent to \$8,071.2 million in 2007 vs 2006; of that, independent optical retailers and ECPs captured a 44.5 percent share, while sales through optical chains represented 33.7 percent of the U.S. market in dollars in 2007. Mass merchants held 10.6 percent of last year's frame market.

Lens Market - Dollars

Retail structure



Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA

Sales of spectacle lenses slid by 0.4 percent last year, compared to 2006, to \$7,629.2 million. Independents also saw their share of lens dollar sales decline in 2007, to 46.3 percent; optical chains and mass merchants, on the other hand, had increases in their lens market shares over 2006.



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Vision Market Virtually Flat in '07: VisionWatch

Continued from page 38

and eyecare professionals' share of industry dollar sales decreased in the key frame and spectacle lens markets in 2007, while increasing in plano sunwear and contact lenses; independents' share of industry dollar sales remained unchanged in 2007 in non-Rx readers.

In U.S. frame sales, independent retailers and ECPs captured 44.5 per-

cent of the total \$8,071.2 million dollar volume last year, down from their 45.1 percent share of frame dollar sales in 2006. Optical chains held 33.7 percent of the 2007 frame market in dollars, up from 32.3 percent the prior year, while the mass merchants' share rose from 10.5 percent in 2006, to 10.6 percent of frame dollar sales in 2007. Department store optical departments held just 4.9 percent of dollar sales in frames last year, down from 5.6 percent in 2006.

In the lens category, 46.3 percent of

the year's \$7,629.2 million in U.S. industry dollar sales was done through independents, down from 48 percent of total sales in the prior year. Another 33.1 percent of last year's lens dollar sales went through optical chains, up from their 32.1 percent share in 2006; mass merchants held a 12.4 percent share of U.S. lens dollar sales in 2007, up from 11.8 percent the previous year. Department store optical departments saw their share of lens dollar sales edge up to 5.1 percent, from the 5 percent share they held in both 2006 and 2005.

As for specific types of lenses sold, among those VisionWatch survey respondents who purchased lenses during 2007, 22.4 percent said they bought AR-coated lenses (up from 21.7 percent who bought AR during 2006), while 15.5 percent of the respondents reported purchasing photochromic lenses last year, compared to 15.1 percent of VisionWatch respondents in the previous year.

Independent retailers and ECPs saw their share of the \$2,196.5 million in dollar sales of plano sunglasses increase last year to 11.8 percent, vs. their 10.5 percent share of the sunwear dollar market in 2006. Optical chains had a 7.1 percent share of the total 2007 sun market in dollars, up from 7 percent in 2006; grocery/drug/convenience/variety/mass merchant outlets held a 25.7 percent market share, up from their 25.1 percent share of sunwear dollar sales in 2006. The lion's share of sales

in this category continued to be through "other" types of retail outlets, which held 48.2 percent of plano sunglass dollar sales in 2007, although that share declined from their 50.3 percent in 2006.

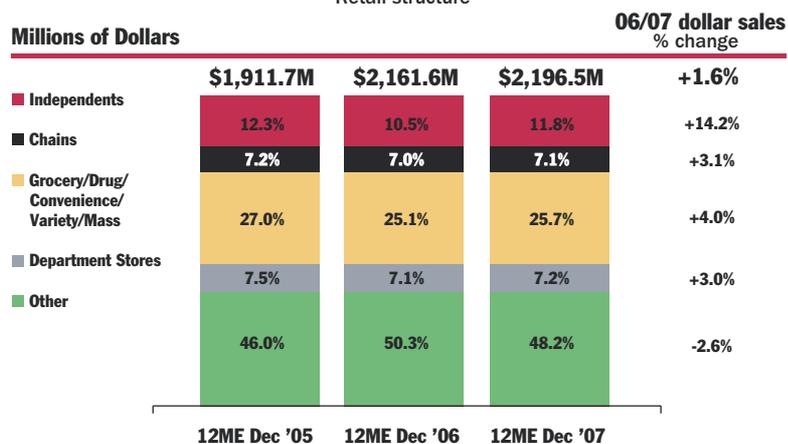
Independents retained the top share of dollar sales of contact lenses last year; the total CL dollar volume in 2007 rose 3.4 percent to \$2,448.7 million. The independents' share of that market rose slightly to 38.1 percent last year, up from their 38 percent share of CL dollar sales in 2006. Optical chains' CL market share dropped to 18.1 percent of total dollar volume last year, down from an 18.5 percent share in 2006; mass merchants' share of CL dollar sales in 2007 remained even with the prior year at 21.4 percent of the total. The "other" retail category, which includes online CL sales, also saw a slight market-share increase to 22.4 percent of the total CL dollar volume, from 22.1 percent in 2006.

Of the \$643.7 million in U.S. sales of non-Rx readers during 2007, dollar sales through independent optical retailers and ECPs represented 4.8 percent of that total, the same market share as the prior year. Optical chains' share of the reader market's dollar sales fell to 6.8 percent in 2007, vs. a 7.1 percent share in 2006; grocery/drug/convenience/mass merchant stores still held the largest share of dollar sales in readers, at 75.4 percent, but that share was down from their 78.1 percent slice of the dollar-sales pie for readers.

—Cathy Ciccolella

Sunglass Market - Dollars

Retail structure

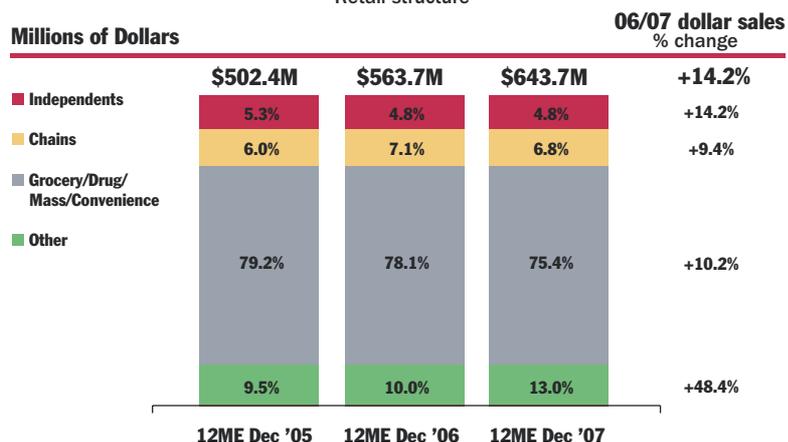


Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA

With a 1.6 percent increase in dollar sales over 2006, the U.S. sunglass market reached \$2,196.5 million in 2007. Independents saw their market share of plano sun dollar sales increase last year; optical chains, mass merchants and department stores also had share gains in sunwear.

Readers Market - Dollars

Retail structure

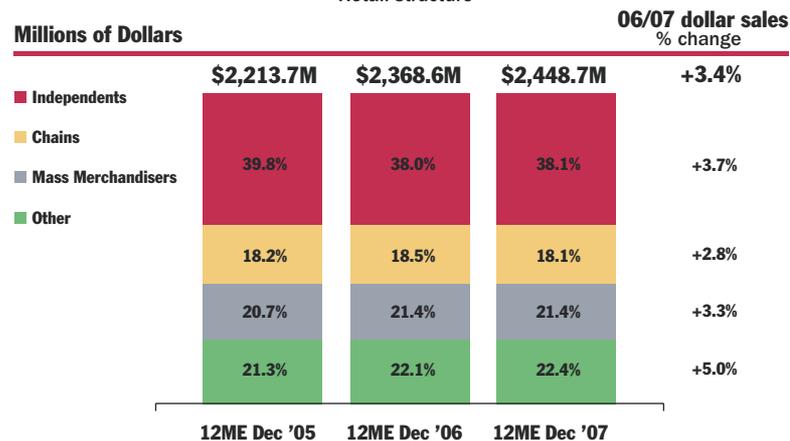


Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA

The non-Rx readers category soared 14.2 percent in dollar sales in 2007 over 2006, to \$643.7 million. Of those dollar sales, independent retailers and ECPs held a 4.8 percent share; optical chains took 6.8 percent. The leader was the grocery/drug/mass merchant/convenience store segment, with 75.4 percent.

Contact Lens Market - Dollars

Retail structure



Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA

Contact lens sales totaled \$2,448.7 million last year, up 3.4 percent, compared to 2006. Independents held 38.1 percent of CL dollar sales in 2007, followed by "other" retailers with 22.4 percent, mass merchants with 21.4 percent and optical chains with 18.1 percent of CL dollar sales.



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NEWS VIEWS

Expo East Offers Glimpse Into Eyecare's Future

NEW YORK—With More than 525 leading companies expected to participate in the exhibits, as well as featuring several pavilions attendees can make the most of the upcoming Vision Expo East with one-stop-shopping and continuing education all rolled into one event.

The exhibition portion of the event is scheduled for April 11 – 13 at the Jacob Javits Convention Center here. Show floor highlights will include:

The Lenses & Processing Technology Pavilion features companies that handle lenses, lens technology and finishing

equipment. Eyecare professionals can learn about the latest in eyeglass lenses and lens technology including materials, designs and coatings, finishing equipment technology, lens surfacing technology, lab equipment finance companies and lens and frame processing tools and supplies.

The Medical & Scientific Pavilion and Theater is the first stop for those interested in contact lenses and solutions, pharmaceuticals, medical diagnostic equipment, practice management technology and low vision devices. The Theater is again offering free CEU courses as well.

The Low Vision Pavilion is part of the Medical & Scientific Pavilion and Theater. Adding low vision to a practice can have a huge impact on customer care and future business growth. As a show within a show, professionals can source more products quickly and efficiently.

The Underground is an elegant counterpoint to the excitement and bustle of the show floor. This chic sanctuary is home to only the most established high end



couture designers. Advanced appointments are strongly suggested. Please visit www.visionexpoeast.com for contact information for designers participating in the Underground. If you're interested in fashion, don't forget to also check out the **Galleria**, a special boutique for the most fashion-forward lines in eyewear and accessories from around the world.

This year's show includes a new locator system as well as a photo booth opportunity to celebrate the new International Vision Expo logo. Also new to the show is internationally renowned Brazilian artist Marcello Cipis, who has created four special illustrations for International Vision Expo East and will sign them at the show. All proceeds from the signing will be donated to optical charities including Optometry Giving Sight, Special Olympics—Lions Club International Opening Eyes Program, and Unite for Sight.

In addition to the exhibit, the exclusive conference program runs April 10—13, 2008, and offers more than 250 hours of continuing education. All topics and speakers are selected by an advisory board whose goal is to provide a spectrum of choices for optometrists, ophthalmologists and other ophthalmic professionals. New courses, exclusive classes and hot issues are all on the program. For the full conference schedule, descriptions and featured speakers, as well as continuing education credit status approval, visit www.visionexpoeast.com.

International Vision Expo, the world-wide conference and exhibition for eyecare and eyewear, is a trade-only event which draws more than 15,000 eyecare professionals each year. Co-owned by Reed Exhibitions and The Vision Council of America), International Vision Expo gives back to the entire ophthalmic community by creating programs that educate consumers about the importance of regular vision care. ■

Events Schedule

Thursday, April 10

10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Contact Lens Boot Camp: Sponsored by Vistakon	Room 1E08
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Optical Boot Camp, Level 1: Sponsored by Essilor, Crizal & Varilux	Room 1E19
10:00 am – 5:30 pm	Continuing Education Program	E Hall, Level 1
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Contact Lens Boot Camp (cont'd)	Room 1E08
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Optical Boot Camp, Level 1 (cont'd)	Room 1E19

Friday, April 11

8:30 am – 7:00 pm	The Underground Exhibits	Special Events Hall
9:00 am – 12:00 pm	Medical Coding for 2008: Sponsored by NYSOA	Room 1E20
9:00 am – 5:15 pm	Continuing Education Program	E Hall, Level 1
9:30 am – 6:00 pm	Exhibit Hall and Galleria Exhibits	Level 3, Level 4
12:45 pm – 1:45 pm	National Federation of Opticianry Schools	Room 1E14
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	College Bowl: Sponsored by Essilor Free Fashion Panel	Room 1E10

Saturday, April 12

8:30 am – 11:30 am	Magnify Your Future: Sponsored by The Vision Council's Low Vision Division	Room 1E17
8:30 am – 12:30 pm	Optical Boot Camp, Level 2 – Top Gun: Sponsored by Essilor, Crizal & Varilux	Room 1E19
8:30 am – 4:00 pm	Continuing Education Program	E Hall, Level 1
8:30 am – 7:00 pm	Underground Exhibits	Special Events Hall
9:30 am – 6:00 pm	Exhibit Hall and Galleria Exhibits	Level 3, Level 4
9:45 am – 11:45 am	The Art of the Deal: Practice Transitions	Room 1E12
12:45 pm – 2:45 pm	And Associate Relationships: Sponsored By NYSOA You Can Do A Low Vision Exam: Clinical	Room 1E16
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Tips, Pearls and Techniques: Sponsored by The Vision Council's Low Vision Division What Choices Are There After Graduation	Room 1E12
2:00 pm	And How Do I Get There? Sponsored by NYSOA	
4:00 pm	Voting Ends for New Product Showcase	Crystal Palace, Level 3
	Vision Choice Award Presentations and	Crystal Palace, Level 3
	Exhibit Hall Shopping Spree Drawings	

Sunday, April 13

8:30 am – 11:30 am	Low Vision Case Study Workshop 2008: Sponsored by The Vision Council's Low Vision Division	Room 1E16
8:30 am – 2:15 pm	Continuing Education Program	E Hall, Level 1
8:30 am – 5:00 pm	Underground Exhibits	Special Events Hall
9:30 am – 5:00 pm	Exhibit Hall and Galleria Exhibits	Level 3, Level 4

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VCA's E&A Division to Sponsor Trend Program

ALEXANDRIA, Va.—The Vision Council of America's (VCA) Eyewear and Accessories (E&A) Division will sponsor a free trend presentation during International Vision Expo East targeting product development and design managers of E&A Division member companies on Thursday, April 10 at 8:00 a.m. at the Warwick New York Hotel.

This first time, exclusive presentation, given by trend expert Ellen Campuzano from the Committee for Colours and Trends, will provide a two-hour overview of the spring 2009 fashion trends and a

sneak preview of fall 2009 trends.

"We are extremely excited to provide our members the opportunity to preview the up and coming fashion trends and enable them to translate these trends into their eyewear collections," said Jamie Shyer, chair of VCA's E&A Division. "This is a program we feel is a must for all of our members, and will give them a remarkable advantage with developing their 2009 frame and sun-glass assortments."

Campuzano founded the Committee for Colours and Trends over 25 years

ago and has traveled the world to cover the major fashion collections, visit trade shows and shop retail. The Committee for Colours and Trends is a major color forecasting, trend tracking, and consulting service in North America for the footwear and accessories industry.

For more information regarding the

event, contact Donna Van Green, VCA Eyewear and Accessories Division liaison at (973) 702-7671, at dvangreen@vision-site.org or at dvangreen@aol.com. To register for the trend presentation, please contact Amber Robinson, VCA member services assistant, at (703) 740-1094 or at arobinson@visionsite.org. ■

Vision Expo East Welcomes 80 New Exhibitors For '08

NEW YORK—Vision Expo East will BE welcoming some 80 new exhibitors when it opens April 11, 2008 at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center here.

"We are pleased to welcome these new participants to the Show. This group represents and adds to all facets of our already diverse exhibitor base," said Tom Loughran, event director. "Today, there are 172.3 million American adults that currently wear some type of vision correction—a fact that makes it imperative to stay at the forefront."

For a complete listing of companies and their booth numbers, please visit www.visionexpoeast.com.

A total of 525 exhibitors are participating in the event that runs through April 13, 2008.

New Exhibitor List

Company	Booth		
A&R Optical Machinery Inc.	LP3400	INTEROJO INC/Polyvue Dist.	LP4108
Accessureyez	3916	Jiangsu Dongbao Optical Co.	LP4115
Airclip Inc.	1579	JP CORPORATE INVESTMENT	4237
AM GROUP PLUS Sp.z o.o.	4246	Jungle Eyewear	4122
Bates Display & Pkg. Company	1948	K&S Optical Design Ind. Corp.	4217
Bestway Enterprise Co., Ltd	4140	KB Seiren, Ltd.	4159
BRICAN America LLC	MS1060	Konan Medical Corp	MS1157
Brillebrille	4120	Lentes AnyDay	MS1016
Brintech Eyewear	4233	Lighthouse International	MS1202
C.C. Systems	LP4101	Lucky Sales, Inc.	LP4001
Carl Zeiss Vision Inc.	LP2818	Matsco	4216
ChromaGen Vision LLC	MS1122	MAX Eyewear	3086
Clarity Medical Systems, Inc.	MS1273	MEI srl	LP3812
Comlite Systems	4139	Mes Lunettes Eyewear / Bellinger	G5202
Econo-Lite Products, LLC	3970	Mings Optical	LP4005
Element Eight USA	3856	My Vision Express	MS1260
Eugen Nussbaumer GmbH	G5128	National Lab Express	3860
Eye Eco, Inc.	MS1301	New Kong Trading Company	4128
Eyesistant	MS1068	OptiMan	4116
Fashion Elite	2486	Optylux	3078
Frame Displays	3387	Physician's Wellness Group	MS1272
Frame Fetish, Inc	4221	QEF Design Corp.	1574
Fu Sheng Optical Industry Co., Ltd	3978	RAC Paris LLC	3846
Fuzhou Formosa Glasses Co., Ltd.	1679	Riccino (Xia Men) Optical Co., Ltd.	4118
Gold & Wood	G5306	Rich Eyewear Group	4056
Good Shepherd Products	4238	ROSEYE.INC	3076
Harbour Monocles	4143	Royal Vision	2979
		Shanghai Bestway International	4141
		Shanghai Lighthin Glasses Co., LTD	4157
		Skagen Designs, Ltd.	3972
		Specialty Lens Corporation	LP2726
		Starlight Accessories	1580
		The Lens Company	LP4007
		The Quality LIFE, Inc.	4119
		Three Rivers Optical	1681
		US Ophthalmic LLC	LP3314
		Varitronics Inc	3974
		VICTORY EYEWEAR	2887
		Visco Vision, Inc.	MS1061
		Vision & Fashion Poland	4223
		Vision Star Ilc	3811
		Walters Low Vision Optics	MS1307
		Wenzhou Guanhao Glasses Co., LTD	4161
		WENZHOU LIDONG OPTICAL MFG CO.,LTD	4142
		West Optical Manufactory Co Ltd	3679
		William Morris London Eyewear	4219
		Williams Group	4038
		Y & C Enterprises Inc.	4144
		YAAD Inc. LP3400	MS1173

Spring Fashion Trends for '08



NEW YORK—For those buyers on the lookout for trends that are hot, revamped and vibrant, this season's eyewear is making a big splash on the spring fashion scene. With shapes, styles and colors inspired by runway fashions, it will be easy to provide your customers with eyewear to perfectly accent their wardrobe and lifestyle.

According to VCA's Eyecessorize, here are some of the trends to watch. Women's eyewear trends include:

• **Career Chic:** Colors are subdued, with an emphasis on taupe, grey, black and tinted whites. Nothing too oversized, subtle designer logos, tortoise and half specs keep this look ladylike and chic.

• **Indie Spirit:** Butterfly and cat-eye shapes run rampant, in plastics and eye-popping shades of blue, yellow, orange, green and pink. On the flip side, natural details such as leather, wood, bone and horn add an earthy spirit to frames.

• **Modern Pin-Up:** A sprinkling of sparkle and bold designer logos showcase the glamorous side of eyewear,

while delicate accents and filigree evoke a sense of transparency. Frames shine in faux ivory, metallic and pretty pinks and purples.

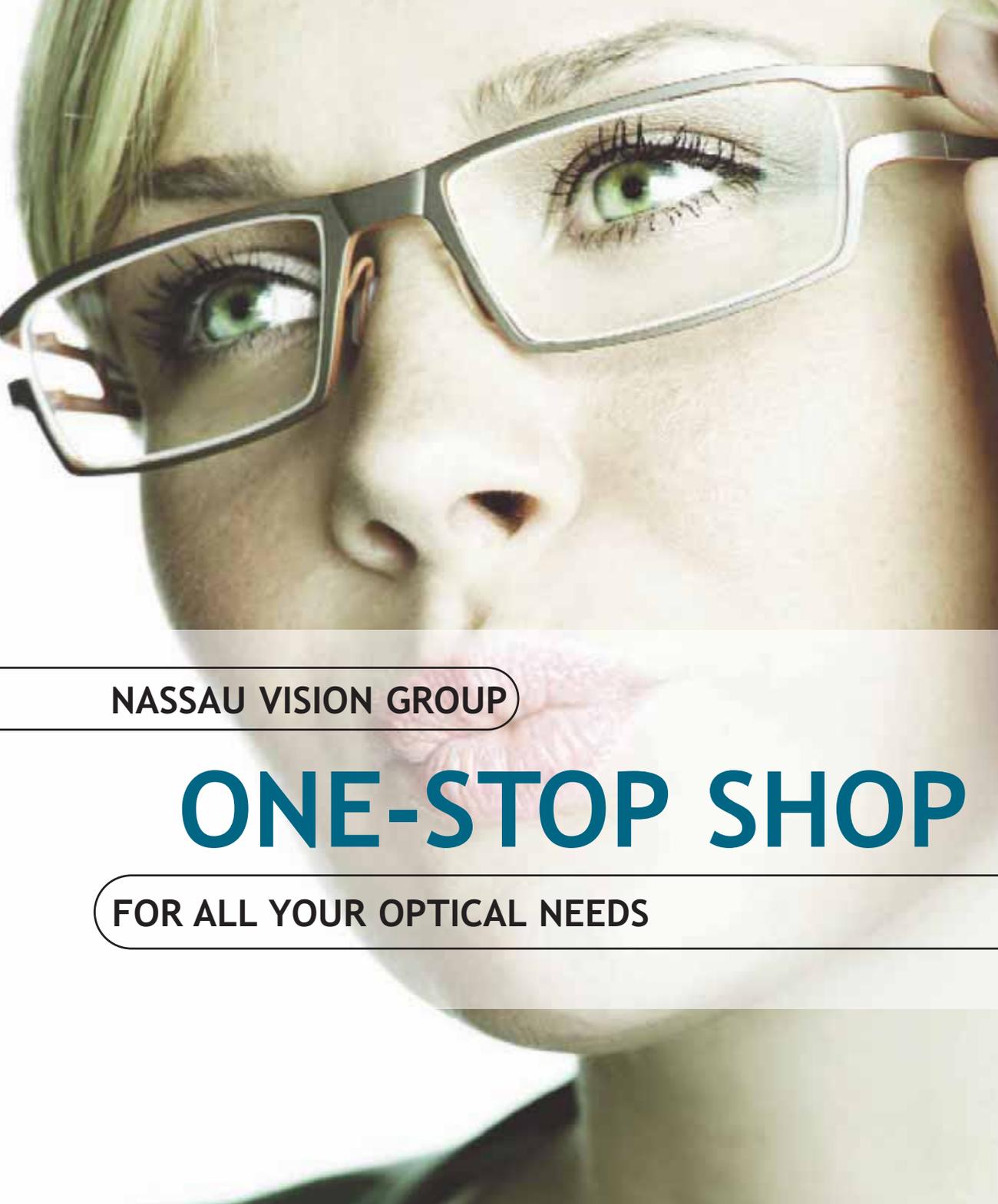
The latest eyewear looks for men include:

• **Back in Business:** Traditional, sleek metal frames pull together this professional image. Double bridges, tortoise, horn, black, brown and silver frames embody the look of a man who is all business.

• **Urban Male:** Look deep into the 80's to be inspired by the printed frames, colored lenses and bold designer logos. Bright colors create a retro vibe while oversized frames, shields and aviators bring it all together.

• **Active Endeavors:** Performance driven—lightweight, polarized lenses, reflective and wraparounds are the way to go. Look for frames in black, white or navy and colored lenses or ultra-light frames from luxury metals and chrome.

For more information on eyewear trends and information, visit www.eyecessorize.com. ■



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NEW YORK—Vision Expo is pleased to once again partner with Broadway Inbound this year to offer Vision Expo eyecare professionals the opportunity to purchase discounted Broadway Show and New York City tour options.

New York is one of the most exciting cities in the world to visit, and many

attendees are planning to come early or stay late to take-in as much of the city as possible while you are here for the conference. It would be unheard of to travel to New York City without seeing a Broadway Show or taking a tour of the city landmarks, so Vision Expo is making it easy for attendees to see a show while in New York City.

All of the prices and services are exclusively available to Vision Expo East delegates only from April 7 to 15. Many of the prices are 10 percent to 35 percent off the regular ticket price.

If a date or show is not shown it may be because it is sold out. For booking information go online to www.broadwaygetaways.com/packages/.



Vision East 2008 FREE Shuttle Bus Service HOTELS BY ROUTE

Route 1

1st Stop: Holiday Inn Midtown, (57th Street between 10th & 9th Aves), also servicing Hudson Hotel

2nd Stop: Sheraton New York (on 7th Avenue between 52nd & 53rd Streets), also servicing Sheraton Manhattan

3rd Stop: Crowne Plaza (on Broadway between 49th & 48th Streets), also servicing **The Time, Doubletree Guest Suites, Hampton Inn, Hilton Garden Inn**

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Hours of Service:

Thursday, April 10
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Friday, April 11
7:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
& 3:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 12
7:15a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
& 3:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Sunday April 13
7:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
& 3:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Route 2

1st Stop: Marriott Marquis (on 45th Street between Broadway & 8th Ave), also servicing **W Times Square, Westin Times Square, Renaissance, The Muse, Holiday Inn Express, Royalton Hotel**

Route 3

1st Stop: W New York (on Lexington Avenue between 49th & 50th Streets, across the Street), also servicing **Marriott East Side**
2nd Stop: Roosevelt Hotel (on 45th Street between Madison & Vanderbilt Avenues)

Route 4

1st Stop: Penn Station (on 31st Street between 7th & 8th Avenues by Green Awning)

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NEWS VIEWS

Vision-Ease Lens Debuts Bilingual Web Site



RAMSEY, MINN.—Vision-Ease Lens recently introduced its first bilingual Web site enhancement, specialized to serve its growing Latin American client base. With the Web site extensions, Vision-Ease Lens is now able to offer

comprehensive communication and increase its credibility among diverse consumer markets.

In addition to listing product specifications, the Web site provides users with Vision-Ease Lens product availability, technical education, in-country distributors, poly processing tips and contact information.

“This new site allows us to extend our Web presence and more effectively communicate with a Latin American client-base community,” said Barry Resnik, director of marketing, Vision-Ease Lens. “With everything from sell sheets to technical specifications, we’re able to inform all of our key audiences about Vision-Ease Lens products—with-

out any communication barriers.”

The translated site brings added resources to a newer, more specific market for Vision-Ease Lens. By relaying technical product information in an accommodating language, the Latin American Web site gives users the visibility to purchase Vision-Ease Lens products in their own country.

“We’re now about to communicate with and distribute to the smaller accounts that weren’t able to access products,” said Resnik. “Meeting the needs of our Latin American audience, the new Web site keeps our key markets up-to-speed on the necessary sales and product tools with a convenient, easy to access resource.” ■■

Essilor Makes Acquisitions in Canada Puerto Rico, Bulgaria

CHARENTON-LE-PONT, France—Essilor has made three new acquisitions that are intended to boost external growth.

Essilor International's subsidiary Essilor Canada has acquired a majority stake in Westlab Optical, a prescription laboratory located in Montreal, which generates sales of \$4 million Canadian. The partnership focuses primarily on developing the company's portfolio of combined lens/frame packages.

Separately, the lens maker is accelerating its development in Eastern Europe by setting up operations in Bulgaria. Its new subsidiary Essilor Bulgaria Eood has acquired Optymal Ood, which currently distributes Essilor lenses and instruments in Bulgaria and has sales of nearly €1 million. According to Essilor, the acquisition will enable it to enhance its competitive position in the fast growing corrective lens market, especially the progressive lens segment.

Additionally, following the acquisition of MGM in 2005, Essilor is strengthening its presence in Puerto Rico by acquiring Rainbow Optical Labs, a prescription laboratory with \$3 million in revenue. ■■

Photo-Physicist Gallas Develops Blocker



Jim Gallas

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—Jim Gallas, a photo-physicist and physics professor at the University of Texas in San Antonio, has created a new product that he says can protect the eye from the harmful effects of ultraviolet (UV) and High Energy Visible (HEV) light.

Gallas' company, Photoprotective Technologies, has developed and patented the product, which he described as a synthetic form of ocular lens pigment (OLP), a yellow-brown tint that occurs naturally in the ocular lens as it ages. Synthetic OLP can be used in the production of both spectacle lenses and intraocular lenses, according to Gallas. He noted that post-cataract patients are particularly at risk of damage from

HEV light, because cataract surgery removes the crystalline lens containing the OLP and substitutes a clear, artificial lens, exposing patients to potentially damaging violet and blue light,” Gallas pointed out. Children may also be at risk of HEV damage because they haven't yet developed a sufficient amount of OLP in their ocular lenses, Gallas said.

“OLP's ability to eliminate UV and reduce HEV is recognized by leading scientists for its role in protecting the retina from Age-related Macular Degeneration,” said Gallas. “It can truly be regarded as ‘as the body's own sunglass lens filter.’”

Gallas has spent years researching the harmful effects of sunlight on the human eye. He is particularly interested in how exposure to UV and HEV light can cause damage such as macular degeneration and cataracts.

Gallas previously developed a synthetic form of melanin, a substance found in

human skin. When used in sunglasses, it protects the eyes from the sun's harmful blue light rays, known as High Energy Visible light, without affecting wearers' color recognition. Photoprotective Technologies licenses the technology to Intercast, Essilor, Specialty Lens and Bocu Vision to produce and market melanin lenses. These manufacturers supply the lenses to sunglass makers and laboratories.

Gallas is currently seeking partnerships with IOL and spectacle lens suppliers that can incorporate synthetic OLP into their products. ■■

Insight Software, VisionWeb Announce Ordering Integration

MIAMI, Fla.—Insight Software, developer of My Vision Express software, and industry Internet portal VisionWeb are announcing the release of version 6.5 of the Express software, which features complete integration with VisionWeb's spectacle lens ordering service.

With version 6.5, My Vision Express users are given options in lab-order submission that include fax, Eyefinity and VisionWeb. With the VisionWeb ordering integration, My Vision Express users can get immediate confirmation of their lab orders directly from VisionWeb.

According to Insight Software's Vipul Katyal, “The company strives to offer eye-care professionals the most powerful yet easy-to-use software that also integrates

with other established industry leaders.”

“VisionWeb is committed to offering technology solutions that make eyecare practices more streamlined and ultimately, more successful,” said Mike O'Malley, VisionWeb's chief operating officer and chief financial officer. “Our integration with My Vision Express allows users to order spectacle lenses to their labs in the most convenient, accurate and efficient method possible.”

My Vision Express is also compatible with VisionWeb's insurance transaction processing service, allowing users to generate electronic claim files and upload them to VisionWeb's clearinghouse, which connects to thousands of payers nationwide. ■■

Transitions Adds Dates to Tour

PINELLAS PARK, Fla.—Transitions Optical has added new dates to the 11-city promotional tour it is mounting to support the launch of Transitions VI lenses. The “Experience Transitions” tour now includes stops in New York, Detroit and six cities in Canada.

The U.S. Experience Transitions tour will stop in New York City on April 1 and Detroit, Mich. on April 3. The Experience Transitions

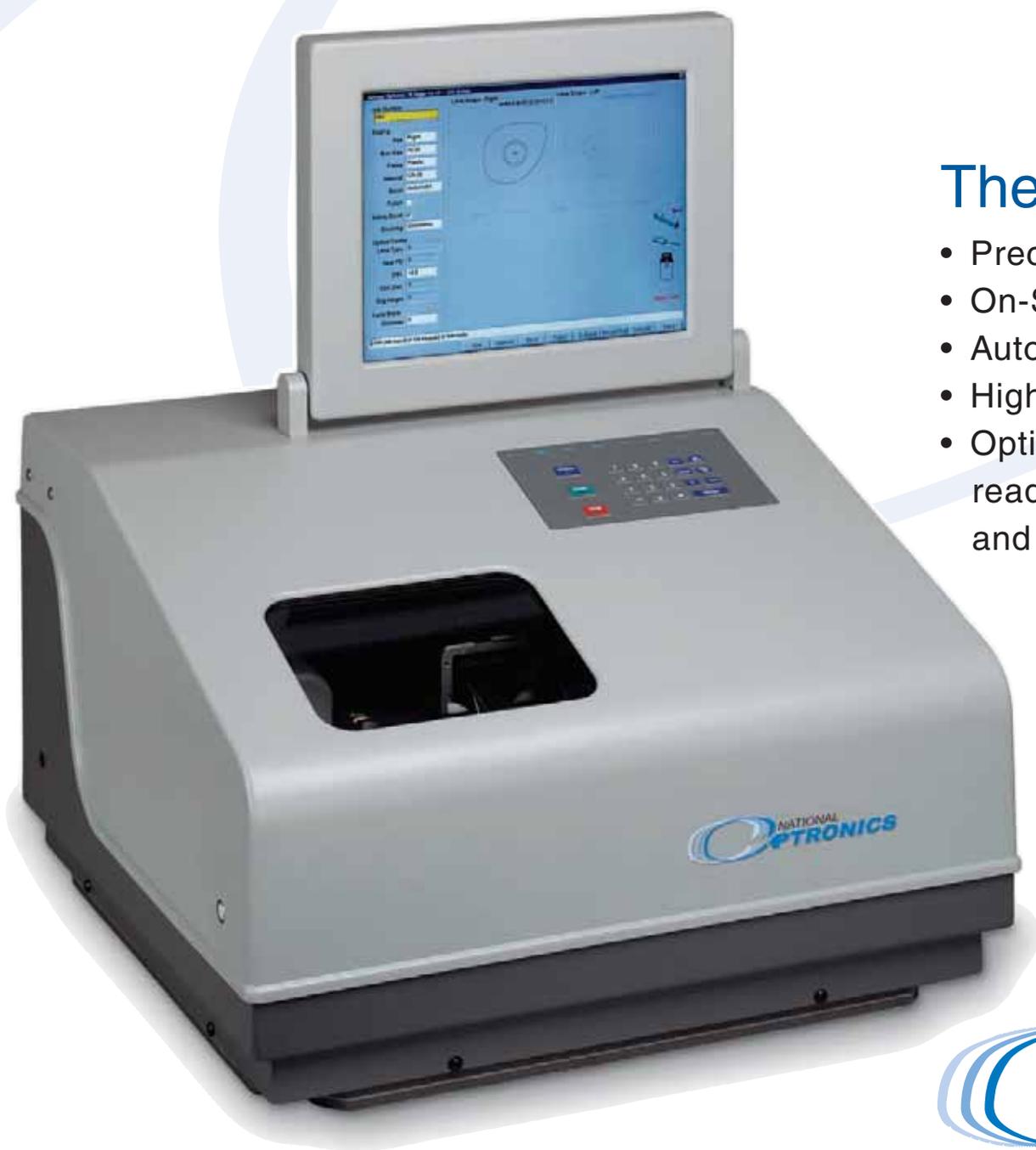
tour will also stop in six cities in Canada.

Eyecare professionals who attend the tour events can experience the performance of Transitions VI lenses and learn about tools and support for the new product. Attendees will also learn the latest updates on consumer advertising, as well as self-marketing tools, in-office/POS tools and education support offered by Transitions in 2008. ■■

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Robert Cohen, OD, Resigns from Emerging Vision Board Following Sale of Cohen's Fashion Optical's Franchise Division

GARDEN CITY, N.Y.—Robert Cohen, OD, president and chief executive officer of retailer Cohen's Fashion Optical, resigned from the board of directors of Sterling Optical parent Emerging Vision a few days after the franchise division of the Cohen's chain was sold to an affiliate of Houchens Industries (See **VM**, March 17, page 8).

Robert Cohen's resignation from Emerging Vision's board and its executive committee came on March 5, according to a filing by the company that day with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

According to that SEC filing, as a component of the sale Cohen executed an employment agreement with the Houchens affiliate which, among other things, prohibits him from serving as a director on Emerging Vision's board. In the wake of the sale, Cohen is continuing in his role of directing and overseeing the Cohen's chain's daily operations, he told **VM**.

Robert Cohen and his brother, Alan Cohen, OD, have been Emerging Vision board members since that company's inception in 1992. Robert Cohen is a former chairman and chief executive officer of Emerging Vision; Alan Cohen has served as the firm's board chairman since May 2002, and continues in that role.

Emerging Vision is currently evaluating candidates to replace Robert Cohen on its board, the SEC filing said.

Reed Exhibition's Val Scott Promoted to Vice President, Strategic Accounts



Val Scott

NORWALK, Conn.—Reed Exhibition Companies has promoted Val Scott to vice president of strategic accounts from her current position as director. In her new position, Scott will add top eyecare retailers to the portfolio of clients that she currently services.

"When it comes to Val, every single exhibitor is a strategic account and they are treated as such," said Ed Greene, CEO of VCA. "With boundless energy and enthusiasm she is truly a force to be reckoned with and we are lucky to have her on our Vision Team."

Scott began her career at Reed in 1995 as a part time sales temp working on International Vision Expo. She quickly rose through the ranks to

become a full-time sales executive and eventually went on to become national account manager. For the past six years, she has held the position of director of strategic accounts.

"Val's most valued award is the incredible positive feedback she receives from her customers every day. Vision Val is the undisputed 'queen' of International Vision Expo," said Tom Loughran, event director responsible for the Vision Shows at Reed.

"Her contributions have been instrumental in the growth of the Vision portfolio, including additions such as the Galleria, The Underground, and the Suites program as well as new initiatives that continue to drive the Vision Events as industry leaders," he said.

Eyeing LLC Names Espinet Senior Director, Product Development

PLAINVIEW, N.Y.—Eyeing LLC has appointed Mark Espinet to the position of senior director of product development.

Espinet joins the growing staff at Eyeing LLC, a New York design, manufacturer and distributor of premium sunglass products. In his new position, he will oversee all facets of product development at Eyeing LLC, including design, sourcing and manufacturing for all divisions.

Espinet joins Eyeing LLC from Carl Zeiss Vision Sunlens where he held the position of commercial director for North & South America where for the past 10 years he was instrumental in growing their businesses with leading eyewear brands.

According to Shelly Goldman, president of Eyeing LLC, "Mark brings a wealth of technological knowledge and experience to the team and with his addition we look forward to creating technical, innovative products for all of our brands."

Eyeing's current brand portfolio includes Under Armour Performance Eyewear, Hobie Polarized, Arsenal Optix, The Realm and MY FACE, a Private Label division.



Russ Messina

Diversified Ophthalmics Names Two Directors

CINCINNATI, Ohio—Diversified Ophthalmics has named Russ Messina to the position of director of strategic planning, according to Dr. Ronald F. Cooke, president and CEO of Diversified. Prior to joining Diversified, Messina served in various executive capacities with Bausch &



Kay Sharpe

Lomb for many years. Dr. Cooke said, "Russ has gained a strong working familiarity with Diversified during his tenure as director of sales and marketing that will serve him well in his new position. We are particularly appreciative of his success in developing our sales force and in his achievements in focusing our sales and marketing strategies."

In addition to the Messina move, Kay Sharpe, formerly vice president of sales for Rodenstock North America has been named director of sales and marketing for Diversified. Based out of the Dayton, Ohio area, Sharpe will work with Diversified's sales and marketing programs nationwide. Sharpe is an Ohio licensed contact lens and spectacle dispensing optician, and she is experienced in both lens surfacing and edging, according to Diversified.

"Although Kay is a new member of our management team, she is a familiar face to many of us because of her service as our SOLA regional sales manager for many years. Kay is well experienced in the field of ophthalmics," according to Dr. Cooke.

"Both Russ and Kay have years of ability, knowledge, and talent to contribute to Diversified's continuing growth and development," observed Dr. Cooke.

"We know that Russ's skill and experience will serve us well in his new capacity, and Kay will be able to offer her own special insights and perspectives as a new team member. These are important changes in our company's development," he said.

HPC Puckett & Co. Names Managing Director



Jason Meyer

TOPEKA, Kansas—HPC Puckett & Company has appointed Jason A. Meyer to the position of managing director. Meyer has been involved with the management of the firm's optical division for more than 10 years, most recently as senior vice president located in HPC's offices here.

He has been involved in over 50 wholesale optical laboratory sales or mergers since joining HPC and is well recognized as an indus-

try expert on valuation and finance procedures, holding a BBA in finance and economics and an MBA with an accounting emphasis.

Meyer will join HPC's two managing directors, Hiram H. Powell who is active in the communications division and Thomas F. Puckett, who is responsible for the overall management of the firm. HPC Puckett & Company is an investment bank specializing in mergers and acquisitions as well as corporate finance for the communications and optical industries and has completed over \$7 billion in transactions, since it was founded in 1983 by Puckett, according to the company.

Meyer writes the Dollars & Sense column for **VM's Lab Advisor** E-Newsletter.

Wingron Named Administrative Director, AOA's 'Optometry's Charity'



Anna Wingron

ST. LOUIS—Optometry's Charity, the foundation of the American Optometric Association (AOA), recently appointed Anna Marie Wingron as administrative director of the 34,000-member organization.

Wingron will now be responsible for directing and coordinating all activities of Optometry's Charity—The AOA Foundation, including oversight and coordination of ILAMO, VISION USA, InfantSEE, Disaster Relief Fund, Endowment & Scholarship Fund and Tributes and Memorials—according to the AOA.

She will also direct ongoing and special project funding for all of the programs.

Wingron brings more than 20 years of strategic planning, marketing, budgeting, financial planning and fundraising experience to the foundation, an AOA announcement said. Most recently, she was president of Schraeder & Associates, a multi-management consulting firm.

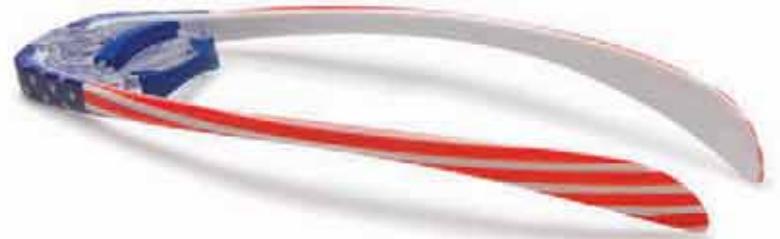
In addition, Wingron has served as director of development with the Jefferson National Parks Association, working with the National Park Service on the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commemoration, and development coordinator for Cardinals Care, the St. Louis Cardinals' community fund.



Read comments from optical industry organizations and ECPs about the proposed FDA guidelines for lens testing in the New & Noteworthy section on VisionMonday.com.

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SCENE AND HEARD

HOUSE PARTY

Pucci Throws Colorful Upper Eastside Shindig



Pucci's Laudomia Pucci (left) and Pierre Bessez of Marchon (right) guided guests through the new Pucci eyewear collection.



Real life mannequins were on hand dressed in Pucci fashions to model the selection of Pucci sunwear on hand.

NEW YORK—Pucci hosted a product preview in honor of their eyewear launch with Marchon at their Upper East side townhouse boutique on Feb. 12.

Laudomia Pucci, daughter of founder Emilio Pucci and image director of the Italian fashion house, and Pierre Bessez, senior vice president of designer brands for Marchon, mingled with guests that included both trade and consumer press, as well as loyal Pucci customers.

"People have been quite enthusiastic about the eyewear line in the store," said Pucci. "We are one of the few brands that successfully marry modernity and classism and now the eyewear finishes the look. We have wanted to have an eyewear collection for a while because we had done it before and this collection takes inspiration from our archives without copying it."

Models were on hand wearing each of the 22 sun styles on display while guests enjoyed perusing the Pucci Spring '08 ready-to-wear collection.



An in store mannequin showcases a look from the Pucci Spring line paired with sunglasses style EP608S from Pucci and Marchon.



A model strikes a pose in style EP607S from Pucci and Marchon.

TEAM EFFORT

Briot USA Holds National Sales Meeting in Key West



The Briot USA team at its national sales meeting in Key West, Fla.

CUMMING, Ga.—Briot USA held its 2008 national sales meeting in January in Key West, Fla. Briot USA's sales, marketing and technical staff participated in the event.

"The Briot team had a great few days together in Florida celebrating our record success of 2007 and setting our sights on 2008. We took the opportunity to look at ways to continue our growth and to streamline our service to our much appreciated customer base in the future" said Bret Davis, president of Briot USA.

An awards dinner was held at the meeting; South Central sales manager Andrew Bumerts, an 11-year veteran of Briot USA, received the company's top sales award.

"Our national sales meeting was a great opportunity for us to come together as a team and not only recognize our top performers, but to also redirect and refocus our efforts for 2008," remarked Rob McCoy, Briot USA's vice president of sales and marketing.



Briot USA's Andrew Bumerts, center, being congratulated by Rob McCoy, vice president of sales and marketing, left and company president Bret Davis, right, for winning the top sales award for 2007.

SUPPORTING OUR TROOPS

Santinelli Sends Care Packages

HAUPPAUGE, N.Y.—The associates at Santinelli International have teamed up to show their appreciation and support for our troops overseas. Knowing that the husband of one of the company's associates is a U.S. Army captain currently stationed in Iraq, the team collected items for several over-sized care packages which were then shipped to the captain's unit, nicknamed The Immortals.

A wide variety of supplies was sent including non-perishable foods, toiletries, books, magazines and DVDs. In addition, many associates prepared home-baked goods and letters from their own families. Pet supplies and food were also collected for the team's new guard dog, Gunner, whom they recently rescued and adopted.

Company president and CEO, Gerard Santinelli, said "As these troops are far from home, we wanted to provide some comfort to them, to brighten their days and keep their spirits up. We felt this small gesture was the least we could do, given the many sacrifices they are making."



Gerard Santinelli, center, with some of the Santinelli International associates who donated care packages to the troops in Iraq.

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SCENE AND HEARD

MEN IN TIES, NOT TIGHTS

Ermenegildo Zegna Opens New Fifth Avenue Flagship

NEW YORK—Ermenegildo Zegna opened its first U.S. flagship boutique, at 663 Fifth Avenue, with a new global concept designed by New York architect, Peter Marino.

The new House of Zegna, which was originally founded in 1910 in the Biella Alps, combines traditional and contemporary design where the Zegna spirit and brand story is reinforced.

To commemorate the opening of the store, The Zegna Group hosted a star-studded event to benefit the Robin Hood Foundation, which funds and supports innovative poverty-fighting organizations in New York City.

Guests, including football stars like former N.Y. Giants player Tiki Barber, N.E. Patriot's quarterback Tom Brady, with girlfriend, Brazilian supermodel, Gisele Bundchen, the N.Y. Giant's Super Bowl-winning quarterback Eli Manning, Today show correspondents Al Roker and Matt Lauer and numerous others in New York's social elite, mingled with Gildo Zegna, CEO of the Zegna Group, in the store's 9,200 square feet of retail space, laid out over 3 floors, on New York's most prestigious shopping avenue.

Entering from the street on Fifth Avenue, the ground floor is devoted to shirts, leather goods, textile accessories, underwear/loungewear, perfume and a large well-lit sunglass display to house the Ermenegildo Zegna Eyewear collection from Viva International. While the second and third floors house the full range of Zegna clothing for work, travel and pleasure.

—Deirdre Carroll



The store facade, made of 900 square feet of continuous glass, with metal struts creates a visual representation of woven Zegna fabrics.



Tom Brady in Ermenegildo Zegna (left) with girlfriend, supermodel Gisele Bundchen (right).



Tiki Barber in Ermenegildo Zegna.

Photo by Patrick McMullan



A nearly floor to ceiling sunglasse display, featuring the brands sunglasses from Viva International greet visitors just inside the entrance.



Pictured left to right, are Gildo Zegna, Peter Marino, and Eli Manning in Ermenegildo Zegna.

Photo by Patrick McMullan



Matt Lauer in Ermenegildo Zegna (left) and Gildo Zegna (right).

Photo by Patrick McMullan

ON THE LAM

Derek Lam Visits Ilori

NEW YORK—Fashion designer Derek Lam hosted an event to preview his sunglass collection at the Ilori Soho Flagship store, here, this month.

Derek's vision for his label was to create clothes that are both luxurious and wearable, with a feminine but unfussy beauty about them. He has extended his unique inspiration for his ready-to-wear collection into the Derek Lam Sunglass Collection which also expresses a sensual, yet wearable and unfussy style. In partnership with Modo, his nine piece collection is hand-crafted by the finest Japanese artisans under the most strict quality standards.

The Ilori Boutique's unique design and "Voice of Ilori" feature wall enabled the designer to showcase his latest collection to a crowd that included Alessandro Lanaro, president of Modo, and Giovanni Lo Faro, director of marketing and business development for Modo, as well as consumer and trade press and a downtown crowd of fashionistas and hipsters.

—Deirdre Carroll



The Ilori Soho Boutique welcomes Derek Lam et al.



Designer Derek Lam poses in front of his collection.



The Derek Lam Collection took over the Voice of Ilori Wall.



(Left to right) Alessandro Lanaro of Modo, Derek Lam and Giovanni Lo Faro of Modo take a minute to catch up.

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MANAGED-VISION NEWS

VSP Names Chair, Boosts Aid to Private ODs

By **Cathy Ciccolella**
Senior Editor

RANCHO CORDOVA, Calif.—James Short, OD, was sworn in as the next chair of VSP Vision Care's board of directors at VSP's board meeting on March 29, succeeding previous chair Dan Mannen, OD.

Short, a VSP board member since 2001, practices at Optometric Associates of South Bend in South Bend, Ind., part of a group practice with three locations in that state that he co-founded.

In an exclusive interview with **VM**, Short outlined the success of the VSP Vision Loans program, and discussed new ways VSP is working to aid private-practice eyecare practitioners. In addition, he revealed a new relationship between VSP and the American Diabetes Association designed to educate consumers on the link between diabetes and vision problems.

The Vision Loans program, a joint effort by VSP and Vision One Credit Union, has now funded more than \$20 million in loans to private-practice eyecare professionals. Noted Short, "Vision Loans directly helps doctors achieve private-practice ownership, grow their business and transition it to the next generation. This contributes to the success of private practice eyecare and the 18 percent increase in the number of VSP network doctors since 2003," when the loan program was initiated.

(Short said VSP added approximately 1,000 more ECPs to its provider panel last year, bringing the total roster to just under 25,000; about 6,000 ECPs have



Vision Service Plan's Nancy Holt, director of provider relations, chats with new VSP board chair Jim Short, OD, during SECO International.

joined the panel since 2000, he noted.)

The loan program is now available in 40 states, with the addition of Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, Rhode Island and Utah during 2007. Vision Loans will expand to include all 50 states plus Washington, D.C., by this September, a company announcement said.

Loan recipients can use the funds for purchase of a practice, salaries for new associates, partnership buy-ins or down payments. According to Nancy Holt, VSP's director of provider relations, about 70 eyecare practitioners have received help from the Vision Loans program so far; 30 percent to 40 percent of those have used the money to launch a new private practice.

While many Vision Loans recipients are younger ODs just starting out, VSP is also kicking off a new program to aid experienced ECPs: a series of "life sem-

inars" designed to help these older ODs build their practices, then transition out of them when the time is right.

The new "Practice Expansion and Transition" program offers both education and consulting services for experienced ECPs. In partnership with The Williams Group, VSP will hold seminars across the country to help ODs who are 55 and older formulate an exit strategy when they are ready to retire and/or sell their practices. After testing the concept in Fullerton and Sacramento, Calif., last fall, VSP will roll out eight to 10 free seminars for ECPs this year, beginning late next month in Boston and Philadelphia, Holt told **VM**. Abbreviated versions of the seminars will also be available on DVDs for ODs who are unable to attend.

In addition to these seminars, VSP also continues to work to encourage its panel members to be more involved in the medical aspects of eyecare, according to Short. The company has contracted with the American Diabetes Association (ADA) to become a strategic partner with that organization. During this three-year relationship, VSP will support the ADA's mission, particularly as it relates to the importance of managing diabetes and preventing complications such as vision loss through regular eye exams and vision care. The partnership includes VSP's participation at expos and healthy lifestyle fairs for Latino families to get the word out on the links between diabetes and vision problems. In addition, VSP will extend the reach of the relationship to raise awareness about eye health via media tours, press conferences, online content and

publications.

"VSP is excited to be a national strategic partner with the ADA said Short. "Our relationship with the ADA is a natural evolution for VSP. With recent VSP initiatives like our diabetic exam reminder and the diabetes awareness program, a stronger alliance with the ADA makes sense.

"Our doctors definitely have the desire to be included in the medical continuum and to serve patients on a medical level," Short said. "Many private-practice eyecare professionals practice in the same area for a long time, so they see patients over a long period—that puts those ECPs in a good position to monitor patients' health challenges as well as their eyecare needs." ■

Eyefinity, Liquid Software Designs Sign Pact for Online Integration

RANCHO CORDOVA, Calif.—Internet portal Eyefinity and Cary, N.C.-based Liquid Software Designs have signed an agreement enabling Liquid Software Designs' practice management system to integrate with Eyefinity's online systems. Their agreement "provides Liquid Software Designs customers the ability to streamline the filing of VSP claims and provide better overall service to private practices that use Liquid Software Designs' lab integration software," according to Eyefinity. ■

EYECARE NEWS

AOA INTRODUCES ONLINE CODING SERVICE EXCLUSIVELY FOR ITS MEMBERS

ST. LOUIS—The American Optometric Association (AOA) has launched AOACodingToday.com, an online coding subscription service available only to AOA members, through Physician Reimbursement Systems. The Coding Today product is designed to help optometrists accurately bill private and government payers, according to the association.

The AOA-only Coding Today product draws information from eight sources, including ICD-9, CPT, HCPCS, modifiers, associated global information and related LCDs as well as Medicare information. It incorporates up-to-the-minute changes from every source, according to the AOA, and features continuously updated, exclusive AOA notes provided by AOA coding experts.

AOACodingToday.com, available only to AOA members, carries a \$349 subscription fee for the first user and \$99 for each additional user. "The subscription fee is a small price to pay for accuracy, reliability and ease of use, said Mark Hennen, OD,

chair of the AOA Eye Care Benefits Committee. The subscription includes free tech support and telephone training.

AOA members can find more information on CodingToday at www.aocodingtoday.com.

VISTAKON CUSTOMER DEVELOPMENT GROUP KICKS OFF E-INVOICING PROGRAM

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.—The customer development group of Vistakon, a division of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, recently introduced a new e-invoicing program, allowing for online review of invoices and monthly statements.

Under the new program, eyecare practitioners can stop receiving daily paper invoices and weekly invoice summaries. The new program also provides ECPs and their staffs an opportunity to reprint past invoices and monthly statements, according to Vistakon.

"Offices have already seen improvements through more intuitive monthly statements," said Jack Rawle, Vistakon's senior director, customer development. "We expect to make even more drastic reductions in paper waste later this year." ■

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OPTOMETRIC EDUCATION

CIBA Launches New Education Initiatives



Rick Weisbarth, OD

ATLANTA—CIBA Vision, the eyecare unit of Novartis, is kicking off two significant initiatives for optometric education: a new Academy for Eyecare Excellence, and—under that venture's umbrella—a First Practice Academy targeting optometrists who have been owners of private practices for three years or less.

Announced during the recent SECO International meeting here, the new programs are designed to allow CIBA “to maximize our support of eyecare professionals around the world, helping them achieve success in both their clinical and business goals,” according to Rick Weisbarth, OD, CIBA's vice president, global head, professional development and partnerships.

The Academy for Eyecare Excellence, which Weisbarth heads, was created “to

add consistency to what we do on a global level,” he noted. It will be overseen by CIBA's Dwight Akerman, OD, in the U.S.; Ross Grant, OD, in Europe; and Tim Grant, OD, in the Asia Pacific region.

The Academy will encompass existing CIBA education programs such as the Management & Business Academy (MBA), launched in this country in 2005 by CIBA and Essilor of America to educate ECPs on the business management aspects of practices. Since its inception, more than 1,500 U.S. ECPs have been through the MBA's training; last year CIBA Vision began similar programs in the U.K. and Australia, and the MBA concept will launch in other markets during 2008.

Under the mantle of the Academy for Eyecare Excellence, CIBA plans to develop differentiated education programs on a global basis, and will also customize its offerings to meet the specific needs of local ECPs and staff in various markets. Programs will target ECPs

operating in diverse practice settings and at different stages in their career, according to the company, and will share “best practices” of highly successful ECPs. Outreach will occur in a variety of formats, such as seminars, publications, research reports, Web sites and regular electronic communications.

Another new program under the Academy for Eyecare Excellence will be CIBA's First Practice Academy, designed to provide strategies and tools “to help independent ODs achieve financial success and enhance their patients' experience,” Weisbarth said. This program is also co-sponsored by Essilor of America, and has been endorsed by the American Optometric Association, he noted.

The First Practice Academy's initial seminar, to be held here in June, is expected to bring in about 80 practitioners for a curriculum focused on business fundamentals, with seminars on finance, profitability, marketing, staff management and the legal aspects of practice,

Weisbarth told **VM**.

“Based on how that one goes, we'll probably do half the seminars in Atlanta and half in Dallas, as we do with the MBA seminars,” Weisbarth added. The company plans to do just a single seminar this year; demand for that one will determine how many are scheduled for 2009, according to Weisbarth.

Akerman estimated that roughly 1,800 to 2,000 of the nation's approximately 35,000 optometrists fit into the criterion of being in private practice for three years or less as a business owner, and so would be candidates for the First Practice Academy.

Weisbarth said CIBA is also considering starting a new program for optometric students similar to the current MBA program.

To give ECPs a single source to keep up-to-date on all its educational offers, CIBA Vision plans to launch a new Web site, www.cvacademy.com, offering a link to all its educational materials around the world.

—Cathy Ciccolella

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The New Rules of the Game:

Sport Performance Eyewear Brings Home the Gold



Photos from iStockphoto

Many people participate in athletic activities as a way to enjoy their leisure time and stay in shape but it is also seriously big business.

By Deirdre Carroll
Associate Editor

NEW YORK—According to the Outdoor Industry Foundation (OIF), a non-profit organization dedicated to encouraging participation in outdoor recreation, as cited in their Active Outdoor Recreation Economy study dated fall 2006, the outdoor recreation industry contributes over \$730 billion dollars annually to the U.S. economy.

The OIF study also reported that more than three out of every four Americans participates in active outdoor recreation each year.

That means that in 2008 it is likely that more than three-quarters of the U.S. population will enjoy some form of biking, camping, fishing, hunting, hiking, wildlife-watching and water and

snow sports in the great outdoors. And that number doesn't even take into account the millions of additional Americans who will hit one of the country's countless baseball diamonds, tennis courts and high school tracks, or want to at least look like they do.

But the best news of all is that most of them will be looking for eyewear that protects their vision and enhances their performance.

Vision Monday explored what these millions of people are looking for in their sport performance eyewear, what retailers and brands have a corner on the market and how the optical industry can bring home a bigger piece of this \$730 billion pie.

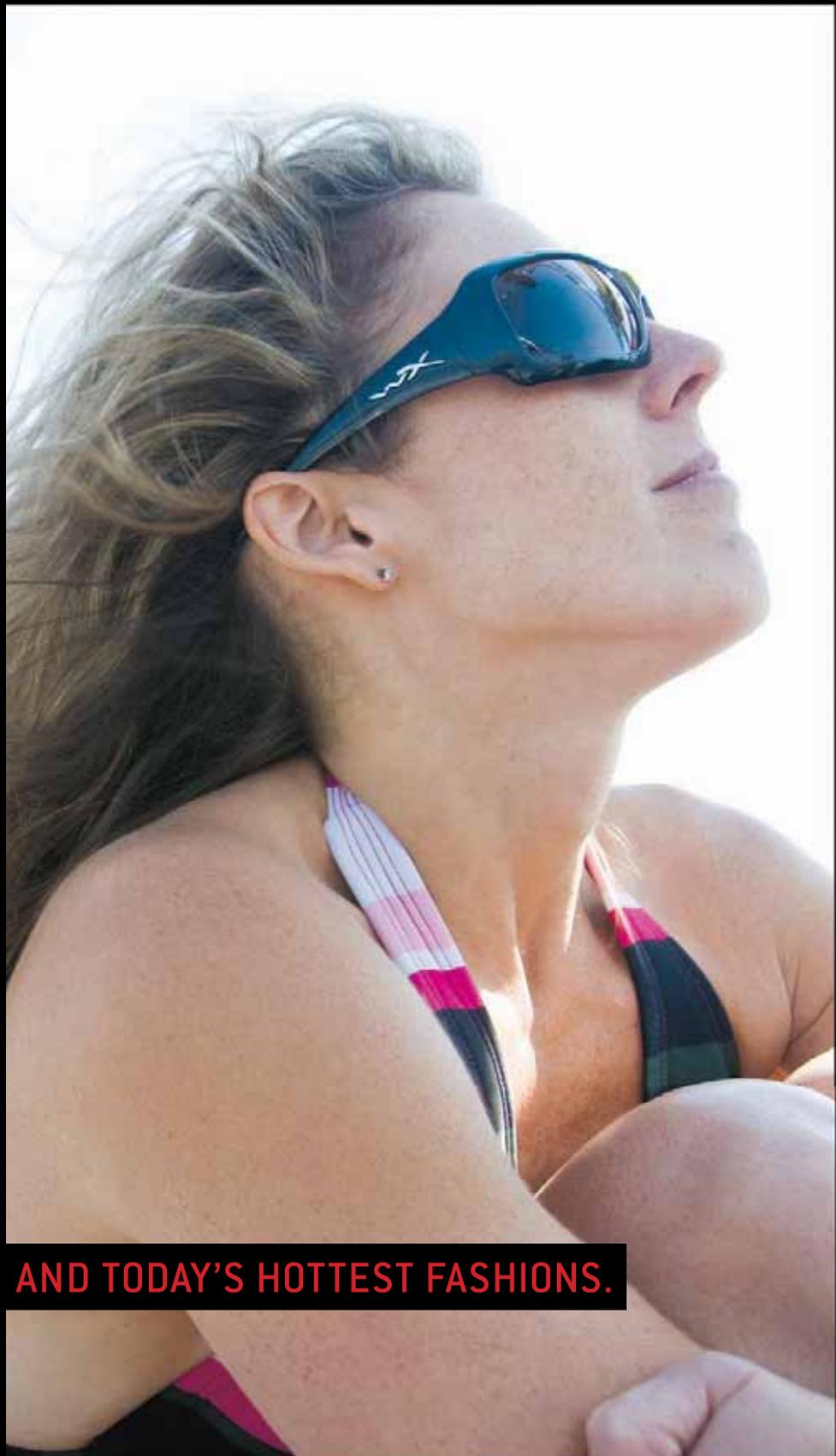
We spoke to experts in the sporting goods and outdoor recreation markets and found that the number of consumers in this market is huge, they're definitely looking for eyewear to enhance their performance and they are willing to spend whatever it takes to get it. **VM** learned there are many opportunities for ECPs to question their sport performance business and ways for them to sell more plano sunwear, and more prescription eyewear as a result.

Consumers as Avid Participants

Americans like their sports. According to the OIF's 2006 Outdoor Recreation Participation Study, Americans ages 16
Continued on page 66



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Continued from page 64

and older participated in a total of 3.6 different types of outdoor activities in 2005.

In fact, the Sporting Goods Manufacturer Association's (SGMA), a trade organization representing the manufacturers of sporting goods, Insight07 Sports Participation in America study found that 77 percent of the U.S. population over the age six, 212 million people, participated in at least one sporting event in 2007.

"The growth of fitness has changed a lot in the last few years," said T.J. Kelly, vice president of marketing for Sportgenic, a San Francisco-based media and technology company that connects marketers to sport enthusiasts via more than 250 sports specific Web sites with more than 20 million unique users per month. "More Americans are involved in fitness related activities than they were in the 90's. They're more aware of the benefits of exercise and much of the growth is coming from middle-aged and older participants. Active consumers seemingly want to where the 'badge' of fitness now more than ever," continued Kelly.

And it is more than the weekend warriors and daily runners jumping on the bandwagon.

"The consumer in this market is everyone," explained Larry Weindruch, director of communications for the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA). "Children who play youth sports; teens who tend to set casual fashion trends by the sport-influenced clothing and shoes they wear; young adults and older teens who no longer play organized team sports but continue to stay active; adults who play in adult sport leagues and join health clubs; more mature adults who play golf, tennis and other lifetime sports; Baby Boomers, who are more into lower-impact fitness activities like exercise walking or cycling; and women, who in the last couple of decades have become much more active, especially in outdoor activities."

As a matter of fact, Sportgenic segments their audience into as many as six specific categories that cover a broad spectrum of consumers. Adrenaline Junkies, ages 18 to 30 who participate in action sports like surfing and snowboarding; Country Clubbers, big spenders who play sports like golf and tennis and may be interested in yachts and equestrian sports; Endurance Athletes, who are passionate about long-

distance sports; General Fitness Enthusiasts, social people concerned with general health and overall fitness; Outdoor Enthusiasts, environmentally conscious participants who enjoy activities such as kayaking trips or mountain bike rides; and Team Players, which includes families, league, team, club, junior and high school athletes, as well as mainstream sports fans.

Actually, according to Sportgenic's own audience survey of 1,040 individuals in August 2007, specialized eyewear is the most likely league or team

sports gear to be purchased in the next year with 24 percent of the respondents saying they would purchase it at least once.

Performance Eyewear in Demand

What's more, Sportgenic's survey found that 75 percent of respondents plan to buy specialized eyewear as part of their endurance sport gear purchases over the next year.

"As sports participants move up the ladder in terms of skills and amount of participation days, they also tend to look for products that help them improve their performance in that sport," said Weindruch.

"Consumers definitely recognize a connection between their performance and their eyewear," agreed Kelly. "Speaking from experience, the right eyewear is very important not only to your vision, but your safety. If you are bombing a single track on your mountain bike and something clouds your vision, you can really get hurt."

"The casual sports participant may look more for the 'cool look' as opposed to high performance from their eyewear, but as you go farther up the performance ladder eyewear becomes more important," continued Weindruch. "Skiing, cycling, running, hunting, fishing, hiking and canoeing/rafting are but a few of the sports where quality eye protection is important."



60 million Americans participated in bicycling, nearly twice the population of Canada, in 2005. - OIF



The number of New England residents who participated in trail-based recreation in 2005 was greater than the combined attendance for all 81 Boston Red Sox home games that year. - OIF



Some 16 million Americans enjoyed snow sports, like skiing, snowboarding and snowshoeing, in 2005, greater than the combined populations of Ireland, Costa Rica, New Zealand and Mongolia. - OIF

And the NSGA, an organization that represent the interests of retailers and dealers who sell sporting goods products, has the sales figures to back up that claim. In their 2007 statistical study of retail sales in the sporting goods market, 19.3 million non-prescription sunglasses retailing for more than \$10 were sold in 2006, raking in

more than \$750 million.

What an Athlete Wants

And since they're spending that kind of money, consumers definitely know what they want. "Product availability, price and staff expertise are all important to the consumer when shopping for performance eyewear," stated Kelly.

"It's both function and fashion to most of our consumers," added Clint Wall, research manager for the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA), the parent organization to the OIF.

"People who participate in different types of activities have different needs. A fisherman, for example, would want polarized eyewear to reduce the reflection off the water," added Weindruch. "Customers, in general, are looking for selection, quality and value. They don't always go for the least expensive product, especially if it is from a specialty store that offers the kind of customer service that helps find the right product for the customer."

In fact, price has less to do with a consumer's decision than would be expected. The NSGA study determined the average price of non-prescription sunglasses retailing for more than \$10 in 2006 to be \$38.86, nearly \$20 more than the national average of \$19.60 for all plano sunglasses sold in the optical market in the same year, according to VisionWatch, a joint study by Jobson/VCA.

Other factors rank as much more important than price to consumers looking to enhance their performance.

"Fit, weight, coverage of face and color of the lens to name a few," explained Kelly.

"One of the big things is finding eyewear that won't fog up," added Weindruch. "Also important are durability, comfort and variety of lens shades and colors. A serious skier, golfer or outdoorsman won't hesitate to spend what it takes on

Continued on page 70



"PAIN IS TEMPORARY. IT MAY LAST A MINUTE, OR AN HOUR, OR A DAY, OR A YEAR, BUT EVENTUALLY IT WILL SUBSIDE AND SOMETHING ELSE WILL TAKE ITS PLACE. IF I QUIT, HOWEVER, IT LASTS FOREVER."

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Few people can give a more accurate view of a category than the retailers who deal directly with the needs and wants of the consumer in that market.

Vision Monday spoke with three leading retailers in the sports performance market to find out what the customer is really looking for in terms of sports eyewear. All these buyers and merchandisers emphasized their expertise in performance products. However, *VM* also concluded there is a huge void among sport specialty retailers who are set up to provide Rx options to the performance eyewear consumer—which is a major opportunity for optical retailers and ECPs.

Eastern Mountain Sports
Brandon Koger, Tech Sport Product Manager,
HQ: Peterborough, New Hampshire
Locations: 70 stores east of the Mississippi



Portsmouth, N.H.

“Our consumer absolutely recognizes a connection between their performance and their eyewear. Eighty percent to 90 percent of our eyewear consumers are looking for product that will enhance

The New Rules of the Game:

Playbook Straight from the Retailer

their performance and very few will make impulse purchases.

“Because we are a functional sport dealer, folks look for the best piece of eyewear for their chosen sport, but it definitely has to have a combination of fashion and function.

“People in general have become more fashion savvy and a lot of brands born in sport and active wear, like Spy and Smith, are starting to broaden and see mainstream visibility. “Without question, polarization has driven a vast change in our performance eyewear business as it has caused the average unit retail price to climb. Replaceable lenses have been growing in popularity and we are carrying more pieces that offer that option. The technology there is still developing, but the Smith Interlock line has done well. I think photochromic polarization is evolving and is the next step up in polarization. We are also seeing more hydrophobic treatments for water sports.

“We carry Smith, Native, Spy, Julbo, Electric and on the less expensive side for that entry level customer, Mountain Shades. We carry the best brands for what our customer needs and do business with the best partners to work with. We are always meeting with new companies or looking for better performing brands and we’re always ready to swap in a hot new brand. I’d say we have about three core brands that we carry deep. Smith, by far, is certainly one that the customer responds to and has a long standing reputation. More than any other brand it has excellent function matched with the cool factor. Native Eyewear is newer and not as recognizable but they are coming up. Their styling is dark and traditional and they have a very good quality story. Their product carries a lifetime guarantee, which is unheard of, and they don’t produce one non-polarized product.

“For our customer, price is the lowest criteria they consider when making their decision. They look for function, fit and fashion, in that order, then options like interchangeable lenses, rubber nose pieces and ventilation. Nobody buys a sunglass without considering the fashion component and manufacturers have definitely started to notice. They want the customers to fall in love with their choice. We are seeing great growth from Internet sales but eyewear is still a per-

sonalized purchase. Customers want to engage the product before committing.

“Much of our in store associate training on the product is done by the vendor reps. Unfortunately, we don’t have a good referral system in place for customer’s seeking an Rx option, even though most vendors have their own lens programs.”

Sunglass Hut
Michael Minadeo, associate VP of product and merchandising
HQ: Mason, Ohio
Locations: 1,600 stores in the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean



Lincoln Road, Miami, Fla.

“We consider Sunglass Hut to be the destination for premium sun in the U.S attracting all segments of the market. Our stores are separated into three categories: fashion, classic and sport.

“In the sport segment, we’re seeing a shift to more lifestyle looks as opposed to the hardcore sport look of previous years. Our sport customer is someone who is somewhat athletic or aspires to be, they have brands they know and trust that they gravitate toward.

“There has definitely been an increase in the customer’s awareness and desire for polarization. Women especially are embracing polarized styles. Lens technology as a whole keeps getting better and better, but more importantly the eyewear companies themselves are getting better at educating the consumers on the advantages of high performance lenses.

“At Sunglass Hut, we are very good at explaining the eyewear and its benefits. Many of our sport customers are ‘week-end warriors’ who strive to be active on the weekends but want to look good doing it. For them it is all about the brands they know and the brands they trust. Brands they know are high quality, like Oakley and Maui Jim.

“They are our most popular brands, but we also carry Revo, Arnette and Bolle. We are always looking at other brands to see what’s new and to understand what is going on in the market but we feel that we have really edited our selection to offer the best options for our customers.”

“Customers get trained on all the sunwear when they walk through our doors and there are definitely those who will spend money for the types of features that will improve their performance. Price is an issue for some customers but for them we have quality entry point options under the \$100 price point. They often just like the look of the sport performance brands and may not want to spend the money on polarized lenses and other enhancements.

“Customers who purchase performance eyewear from Sunglass Hut who ask about Rx-sun options are referred to their local LensCrafters, which also participates in the Oakley and Maui Jim lens programs.”

Gandor Mountain
Rick Rusch, VP of apparel merchandising and product development
HQ: St. Paul, Minn.
Locations: 113 stores in 23 states

“There have been a couple of significant changes to our eyewear business. For one thing, the average price point is increasing as people become more willing to spend higher ticket prices to get the better performance that comes from custom features. Polarization is critical for outdoor enthusiasts, especially in water sports, for enhanced vision and vision on the water.

“Secondly, better frame and lens durability has changed the market. Whether someone is biking or fishing, they often take their glasses off and put

Continued on page 70

The New Rules of the Game:

Oakley: Keeping Up with the Joneses



Lolo Jones in Oakley's Endure

FOOTHILL RANCH, Calif.—After releasing the Radar and Flak Jacket last year, the first sport performance products launched by the company in over six years, Oakley follows up in 2008 with the Endure, the first sport performance eyewear designed specifically for women, according to the company.

Believing fit and style were two key issues not being addressed in women's

sport designs, Oakley collaborated with top female athletes, including Lolo Jones, a world champion hurdler and the face of the Endure marketing campaign, to create a sport performance sunglass designed for women, by women.

After analyzing every aspect of female cranial anatomy and creating a women specific fit, Oakley optimized the Endure for sports with features like interchangeable nosepieces and lenses; anti-slip Unobtanium components; hydrophobic lens coatings and Oakley High Definition Optics.

Complimenting Oakley's performance eyewear is the Masters of Vision lens tint program. Oakley's tints are designed to enhance color recognition, boost visual contrast and improve depth perception. With options like Positive Red Polarized, for hot and humid environments; VR28 Black Iridium, for field sports; VR50 Photochromic, for runners and mountain bikers; Deep Blue and Shallow Blue Polarized, for water sports; Persimmon, for snow sports; and RX, for the muscles that focused vision, Oakley's Master of Vision program has a lens tint for everybody.

Wiley X: Outfitting the Troops at Home

LIVERMORE, Calif.—Wiley X has introduced new high-performance sunglasses for outdoor adventure seekers in their Active and Climate Control Series that cover the gamut of sport activities with advanced eye protection, enhanced visual acuity and stylish good looks.

The three new pieces in the Active Series are suited to a wide variety of outdoor activities from mountain biking to windsurfing and help recreational enthusiasts see and look better in action. The same technology and materials Wiley X has developed to provide High Velocity Protection (HVP) to American soldiers and law enforcement is applied to protect eyes from harmful UV rays, distracting glare, wind, dust, pollen and other harmful irritants.

For bass fanatics with a need for speed, the polarized Wiley X AirRage, part of their Climate Control Series, saves eyes from being buffeted by the wind and spray that whips through the sides of conventional sunglasses. The frames include a removable, durable, symmetri-



The Drapht from Wiley X's Active Series (top) and the AirRage, part of the Climate Control Series (bottom).

cally vented foam gasket that locks securely into place on the lightweight TR90 frames to create a special Facial Cavity Seal, keeping eyes safe and free from irritation in their own climatically controlled cocoon.

All Wiley X eyewear is Rx-able and far exceeds ANSI Z87.1 and ANSI Z80.3 safety and optical standards, while a scratch resistant lens hardcoat protects lenses from scratches and nicks.

Nike Vision: 'See Sport Better'

MELVILLE, N.Y.—“Nike approaches sports eyewear from a ‘solving the problem’ point of view,” said Brent Costner, marketing director of global equipment for Nike. “Athletes expect sports specific components in their products, so we work with athletes to solve their problems and really look at eyewear as a means of improving performance.”

To that end, this season Nike Vision releases two new sport performance sunwear pieces, the Impel and the Tailwind. Both are equipped with Nike Max Optics, a lens technology that enhances clarity and vision at all angles coupled with 100 percent UV protection.

Made for runners, the Impel and Tailwind are streamlined, durable and lightweight, with the Nike Max Speed Tint that reduces squinting by reducing the glare off asphalt. Each has a flying lens to reduce fogging, and an adjustable, ventilated lens and nose. The secure-wrap, occipital fit temples, made of magnesium, have a waffle tread pattern for better grip and interchangeable lenses are available.

“Nike has an amazing program setup with Zeiss in the U.S.,” added Stephen Tripi, Marchon's marketing manager for

Nike Vision. “The program allows Nike's patented distortion eliminating Max Lens technology to be cut into Rx lenses and offers Nike proprietary engineered lens tints. It also allows most



Nike Vision's POP imagery for the Impel.

of Nike's Suns, including Interchange frames, to be Rx'd and because its Nike, every set of lenses is laser engraved with the Nike Swoosh.”

Specialty Lens: Covering the Spectrum

SALT LAKE CITY, Utah—“The interest in sport specific colors, especially for polarized lenses, has grown over the past few years,” said Jon Schmitt, marketing manager for Specialty Lens Corporation (SLC).

“Five years ago, almost all lenses dispensed were gray or brown but now there's a demand from sport participants for more options, like yellow, green, blue, orange, copper, violet and red, which all have specific uses for sports not met by brown and gray.

“So Specialty Lens continues to expand it's selection of polarized lenses in the iRx Polaroid brand and is committed to having the largest selection of polarized colors, materials and lens styles to meet any consumer need. We currently have 12 colors in the line and are adding a new one at Vision Expo East. Our spectrum allows for ECPs to address virtually any sports specific need in any polarized lens sports application.

“We are also releasing a new high index 1.67 polarized progressive lens next month, adding to our already deep line of polarized lenses,” he said.

“SLC has recently re-doubled efforts to reach ECPs with the information and training needed to properly dispense premium sports eyewear. Education is a key issue in understanding how to dispense sunwear for sports. For our iRx Polaroid line we recently created an online training tool and we offer displays to demonstrate the benefits of polarized lenses and their colors.”

—Deirdre Carroll



Just a few color options in the iRx Polaroid product line from SLC.

The Equipment Room

The New Rules of the Game: Sport Performance Eyewear Brings Home the Gold

Continued from page 66
a pair of quality eyewear.”

The great news for the optical industry is that Rx-ability is also a deciding factor for many.

“Another important consideration would be the possibility of getting eyewear lenses that can be ground to prescription specifications,” confirmed Weindruch.

Because of the desire for better vision and protection many consumers of sporting good brands are familiar with companies who have developed their own performance eyewear lines, in addition to the firms whose foundation has been built on providing reliable performance specific eyewear.

“The sporting goods brands that are the most popular are those you would assume to be, like Nike, Adidas, Reebok, Under Armour, and many others. Of course, hot brands rise to the top, like Crocs and Keen, which have been very popular footwear brands in the last few years and Native Eyewear, a sport sunglass manufacturer out of Philadelphia,” said Weindruch.

Kelly continued, “It really depends on

the sport, but the larger brands like Oakley and Smith are very relevant, and core brands, like Electric Visual, also appeal to core audiences in snow and water sports.”

Market Trends

Just like the fashion eyewear brands follow general fashion market trends, so does the sports performance eyewear market follow the sports market trends.

“Apparel and footwear have led industry growth,” shared Wall. “Outdoor lifestyle influenced apparel and footwear is very popular. The outdoor channels defined by the topline were up 10 percent in 2007.”

Internet use is also high among those consumers who can be identified as sports enthusiasts. In the NSGA’s market study, on-line and Internet purchases of non-prescription sunglasses priced over \$10 accounted for 8.7 percent of all dollars spent, beating out sporting goods stores at 5.3 percent and pro shops at .5 percent.

“We have included Internet sales in the study for several years,” said Weindruch. “Internet sales have grown but are still less than 10 percent. It is a not

spectacular growth but it is consistent.”

We are an Internet loving country and online sales are experiencing enough growth that advertisers have started to take notice.

According to Sportgentic’s Kelly, eMarketer.com, an online destination for market research and trend analysis on Internet, e-business, online marketing, media and emerging technologies, estimates that U.S. advertising revenues at sports-related Web sites will reach \$1.1 billion in 2011, up from \$407 million in 2006. As a percentage of overall sports advertising, the Internet’s share will double to 10 percent by 2011, up from 4.9 percent in 2006.

“Looking at it through our lens, advertising expenditure on sports online is up, because active consumers spend a great deal of time online,” said Kelly. “Our study shows 75 percent spend more than 10 hours per week online, looking for people, products and information to fuel their passion for sport. Advertisers see this and are going to be spending more to capture this audience.”

And increased Internet usage isn’t the

only major change to hit the sporting goods market and affect the sale of performance eyewear in the last few years.

“Over the last decade or longer, the trend in the sporting goods industry has been to more large-format retail stores, which have put pressure on locally owned full-line sporting goods stores,” added Weindruch.

“Most locally owned stores have had to adapt by becoming specialty sport shops for soccer, ski, golf, etc. In the outdoor specialty segment, this trend to large format stores is very much in evidence with the growth of chains like Gander Mountain, Eastern Mountain Sports, and REI. Among specialty retailers, REI has a reputation as being very good at what it does.”

National chains and specialty retailers all cater well to this group depending on the needs and level of participation,” added Kelly “Whether it is the local specialty bike shop, or REI, they cater well to the active consumer audience based on their needs. And, this audience will seek out the right retailer in for their chosen sport to get the best selection.” ■

The New Rules of the Game: Straight from the Retailer Playbook

Continued from page 68



Eden Prairie, Minn.

them down and they run the risk of scratching or breaking them, so scratch resistance and durability have become important components of performance eyewear. The hallmark of the average sunglass is that it is disposable and though there is still a market for low-end frames, most people have begun to look at the purchase of performance eyewear as an investment.

“Most of our customers are looking for comfort and overall sun protection regardless of the activity they participate in. I think price is always a point of focus. At the end of the day we have to deal with the fact that sunglasses have a finite lifes-

pan, they can be lost or broken, especially if a pair is not polarized, it is little more than an inexpensive throw-away.

“We see a huge seasonality in our eyewear. There is a year-round business, especially when it comes to goggles and eyewear for the winter season, but our peak is May through August. We put eyewear outposts and displays in each department. In the fishing department the sunglass display carries styles designed for fishing and water sports, our motor sport department has sport goggles, wraps and more protective eyewear and the hunting department features sunglasses with non-glare lenses or might be camo-dipped. We try to customize our mix to reflect the needs of each specific customer. We even carry our own line of Gandor Mountain eyewear and are launching a whole new sunglass line in the Spring.

“There is a natural tendency to gravitate toward a brand but with the launch of Gandor Mountain sunwear we have included a small hang tag on each style that lists the features and benefits of the frame so the customers can make an educated decision. Some brand names have a sort of halo affect that gives customers a feeling of perceived quality.

For us, Oakley is quite popular, as is Costa Del Mar for fishing. For them, their reputations precede them, but in general for our customer it is price, features, then brand name.

“We have no direct Rx program set up for our customers but we will be entering into Internet and direct marketing in the near future. Most of our competitors have been in doing it for years and we see it as a big opportunity to grow.” ■

—Deirdre Carroll

‘New Rules of the Game’— VM, 20/20 Present Special Series

When it comes to sport sun eyewear, performance and style make perfect teammates.

NEW RULES OF THE GAME
SportSUN EYEWEAR

will be followed by editorial coverage on the topic in the April issue of **20/20**. The two

books, along with the Vision Council, are hosting a special seminar with experts in the category on Saturday morning, April 12, from 8:00 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. in the Medical/Science Pavilion at the Jacob Javits Center in New York. And the two books will create a special editorial supplement in June on “The New Rules of the Game: Sport Sun Eyewear.”

Recent advancements in design and technology have expanded the demand for sport sun eyewear far beyond the playing field. And the increasing influence of sport on style is fueling a new sports eyewear trend, creating many opportunities for ECPs to tap into this growing market.



In 2008, **Vision Monday** and **20/20** are teaming up with an exclusive special series dedicated to sport sun eyewear. This month’s **VM** Cover Story

This series is supported by Nike Vision, Oakley and Specialty Lens with continuing education supported by Wiley-X.



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Fashion is all about choice and creativity. We believe patients should have choices to fuel (among other things) their passion for the perfect fashion ensemble. No matter your patient's prescription, with iRx Polaroid she can get creative with her Rx sunwear and the tangerine low heels in the window on Rodeo Drive. It's all about choice.

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IT'S ABOUT THE PATIENT



LAUNCHES

Luxottica Introduces Club Monaco

By Deirdre Carroll
Associate Editor

PORT WASHINGTON, N.Y.—Luxottica Group launches the premiere collection of sunwear and eyewear from the contemporary international fashion retailer Club Monaco. The Club Monaco

co Eyewear Collection is a line of chic, versatile and affordable eyeglasses and sunglasses that complements the modern and urban lifestyle of the brand.

“We are very excited about the launch of the Club Monaco Eyewear Collection,” said Vittorio Verdun, vice president of marketing for Luxottica.

“We are very excited about the launch of the Club Monaco Eyewear Collection. The urban and versatile styling combined with affordable pricing makes this brand a strong addition to our brand portfolio.”

—Vittorio Verdun, Luxottica Group



The CM6006 optical style (top) and the CM6508 sunglass style (bottom) from the new Club Monaco collection by Luxottica.

“The urban and versatile styling combined with affordable pricing makes this brand a strong addition to our brand portfolio. It is an opportunity for our customers to enjoy fashion and design at a great price point.”

Club Monaco has become a must-have brand for urban professionals looking for fashionable, well-designed and affordable fashion pieces and wardrobe essentials. The brand’s growing accessory collection has led to its progression into the eyewear market.

Inspired by vintage frames found on the Italian coast, the collection of 14 optical styles and 11 sun styles is distinguished by its mixed assortment of resin,

Italian horn and Italian leather-wrapped styles. The styles are modern interpretations of iconic classic designs, including an aviator detailed with leather accents.

The collection’s color palette reflects Club Monaco’s black and white brand heritage while the materials continue the brand’s tradition of quality and design partnered with modernity.

POP for Club Monaco Eyewear includes counter cards and a 3-piece display in white plexiglass. In addition, customers will receive a Club Monaco iconic tote bag with their initial order of 12 pieces. The collection is priced to the dispenser from \$48 to \$52 for optical and \$40 to \$50 for sun. ■■

SECOND LOOK

Aoyama Optical, USA—Extreme Appeal in Bed Head Eyewear



The Dumb Blond (left) on woman and the Hook Up (right) on man from the Bed Head collection by Aoyama Optical.

RONKONKOMA, N.Y.—Aoyama Optical USA releases new styles in the Bed Head Eyewear collection for the male, female and unisex market.

Finding a niche as a lifestyle brand, the Bed Head collection is designed to be an expression of one’s inner self through eyewear fashion. The Bed Head brand aims to encompass edgy appeal with European styling for today’s modern frame wearer. The newest styles include chic cat-eyes, racy wraps, and rocking atypical geometric shapes, in a variety of funky designs and multi-colorations.

Two standout styles in the new Bed Head collection include the Hook Up and Dumb Blond. The Hook Up, style number BH-5005, comes in white stripe, gray pearl and brown demi. The Dumb Blonde, style number BH-5001,

shines in clear pink and other colors include brown/clear purple and clear dark blue, available in size 49/17/144.

Each frame comes with a colorful neon, translucent plastic case screened with the Bed Head signature logo. The new Bed Head collection is priced to the dispenser between \$54 and \$59. ■■

SECOND LOOK

BBH Releases New Styles for Men and Women in Brendel

GLEN COVE, N.Y.—BBH Eyewear introduces new men and women styles in the Brendel collection from Eschenbach Optik.

The Brendel Man is designed for a new generation of men who care about their appearance and take their style seriously. The Brendel man is flexible and masculine, and he knows when something suits him.

The first Brendel collection for men features powerful masculine forms and elegant materials. The collection has one acetate and 13 metal models, all available for progressive lenses, with design details like double bridges and modern colors. The acetate frame is a poly-colored frame with square lenses and a dual nose-piece. The metal styles are delicately worked and incorporate the latest in hinge and temple details, like broken earpiece contours, stripes, or combinations of color-coordinated synthetic materials.

The Brendel Woman collection is designed for a woman who lives life to the fullest and emphasizes her femininity. She has long since found her own individual style, and knows how to present it with sophistication.

The frames in the Woman collection come in acetate, metal or titanium. The acetate frames combine radiant colors with discreet nuances, while the metal frames put the focus on the temples, like delicate, climbing-flower details or acetate appliqué. The titanium frames feature clear contours and strong colors.

The Brendel Man and Brendel Woman collections are priced to the dispenser between \$74.99 and \$79.99. ■■



The 90350 frame from the new Brendel Man collection from Eschenbach Optik and BBH Eyewear.

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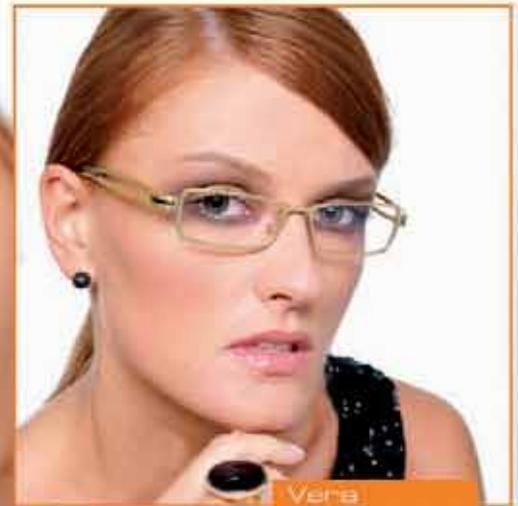
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LAUNCHES

Nouveau Bows Fleur de Lis Eyewear

By Deirdre Carroll
Associate Editor



The Pompei (top) and the Savona (bottom) from the new Fleur de Lis collection from Nouveau Eyewear.

CARROLLTON, Texas—Nouveau Eyewear has launched a new eyewear collection for the mature woman who values classic, feminine styling called Fleur de Lis Eyewear.

“This collection was created to

address the styling preferences of the mature woman who values style but doesn't want to pay designer prices,” said Marj McGraw, co-president of Nouveau Eyewear. “The colors and shapes are age-appropriate, and the styling is feminine, yet simple enough to keep the frames from competing with a woman's jewelry.”

The initial collection includes eight styles, six in metal and two in plastic. All are designed to accommodate progressive lenses. Detailing includes handmade decorations using Swarovski crystals and epoxy inlays and colors range from soft plums and light corals to rich berry shades paired with soft tones of gold and platinum.

Airy silhouettes look both feminine and unfussy. From a filigree floral design on a split temple to clean and simple profiles with demure accents of color and texture, every style is distinguished

“This collection was created to address the styling preferences of the mature woman who values style but doesn't want to pay designer prices.”
—Marj McGraw, Nouveau Eyewear



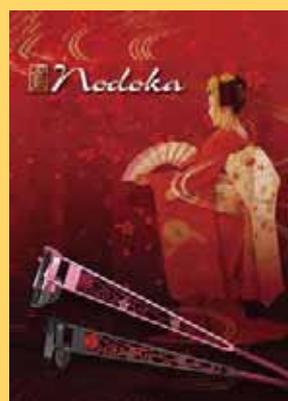
by subtle, feminine accents.

Merchandising includes an in-store display and a brand brochure outlining the collection's design direction and individual frame features. Each frame comes complete with a feminine frame

case and for a limited time an elegant Fleur de Lis pen is available as a gift with purchase of the complete collection.

The initial launch collection of Fleur de Lis Eyewear from Nouveau is priced to the dispenser between \$39.95 and \$41.95. ■

SECOND LOOK



A window display for the new Geisha grouping from the Nodoka collection from Charmant.

Charmant's Nodoka Adds Geisha Group

MORRIS PLAINS, N.J.—Charmant has introduced the new Geisha grouping for their 2008 Japanese-inspired Nodoka collection.

In Japanese culture, a Geisha is “a person of the arts” who entertains with spellbinding renditions of traditional song and dance. The 2008 Nodoka ophthalmic collection focuses on the motifs and decorations found in traditional ornaments worn by the Geisha.

“Ryusui” or flowing streams is represented in the stainless steel temples featured on models 10152 and 10154. Model 10152 features an acetate front in red, black or brown, while model 10154 is a full metal version in orange, pink and purple.

Many different seasonal motifs are used in Geisha's dresses, the “Sakura” or cherry blossom represents the arrival of spring. It is also used as a design element on the front and temples of model 10155, which comes in black, brown and red.

Model 10157 reflects the importance of hair ornaments as a part of a Japanese woman's traditional hairstyle. The acetate temples of this frame represent the type of hair ornaments traditionally worn by a Geisha and come in red, brown and blue.

New POP materials for the collection are reminiscent of Japanese furniture and architecture, and include a logo block, display tray and window display in red and black lacquer with individual cushions in a Japanese textile. All styles in the Geisha group from Nodoka are priced to the dispenser at \$69.99. ■

SA Offers New Materials, AR Coating for Kodak Unique Lens

SAN MARCOS, Calif.—Signet Armorlite's Kodak Unique Progressive, a digital backside lens that is customized for each patient's frame, is now available in more than 30 lens material choices. The latest additions include Drivewear, Transitions 1.60, SA PolarShades 1.60 and Life Rx polycarbonate.

Also, Signet Armorlite now offers its premier Kodak Clean'N'Clear anti-

reflective Coating exclusively on Kodak Unique lenses.

The new coating features all the benefits of Signet Armorlite's award-winning Kodak Clear anti-reflective coating. Other features include a lifetime warranty, plus anti-static properties designed to resist clinging dust in addition to a slicker hydrophobic that is still edgeable. ■

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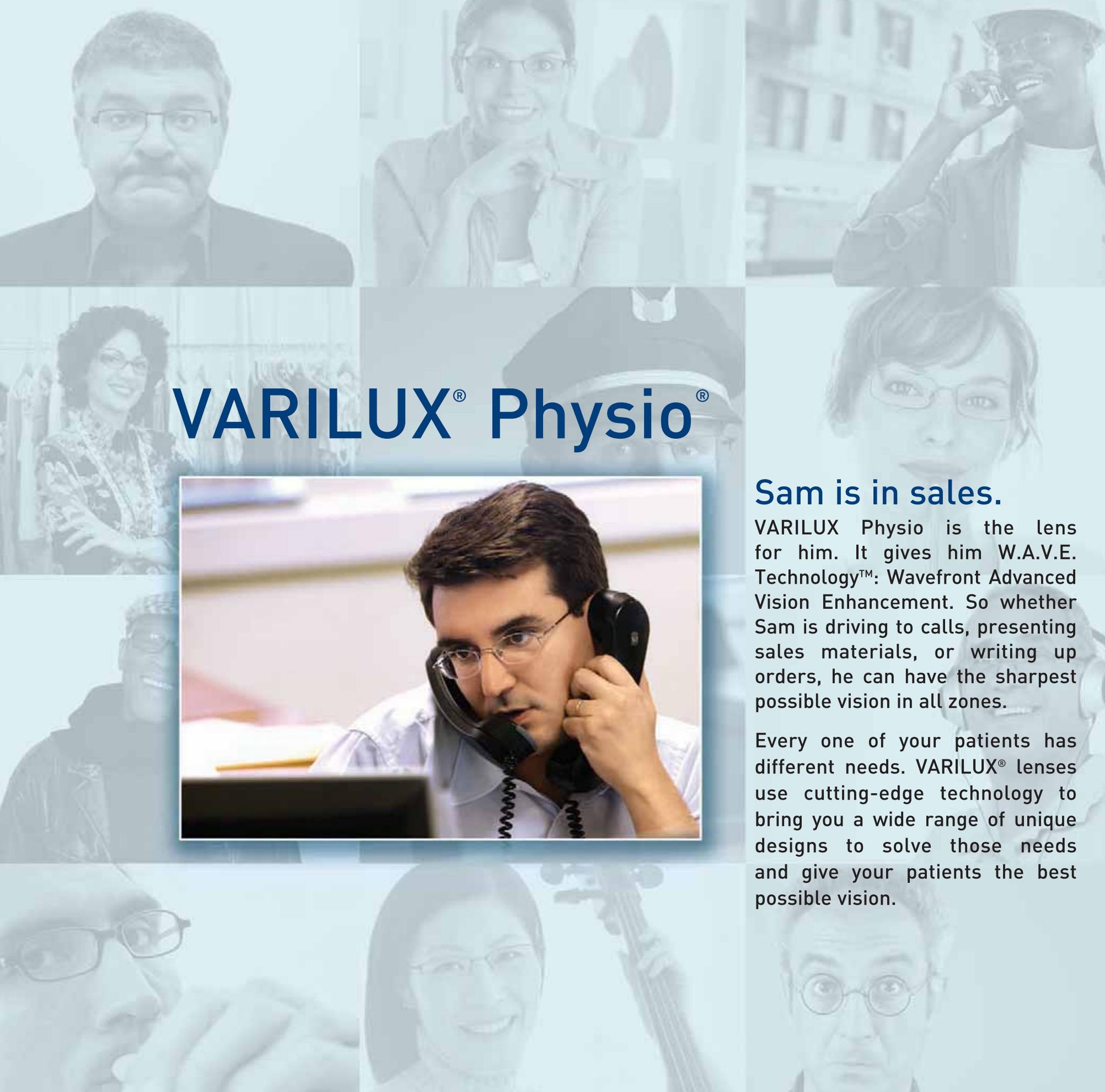
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LAUNCHES

Marchon Unveils Karl Lagerfeld Sun

By Deirdre Carroll
Associate Editor



The KL104S shield from the new Karl Lagerfeld Eyewear collection from Marchon.

NEW YORK—Marchon launches the Karl Lagerfeld Eyewear collection inspired by the powerful spirit and refined style of the man whose signature sunglasses have remained his trademark.

“Dark glasses are like portable eye shadow and the world looks more beautiful through tinted glasses,” said Lagerfeld. “Everybody looks 10 years younger, that is why I always wear dark glasses. I can only see clearly with dark glasses.”

Lagerfeld is known around the world

“Dark glasses are like portable eye shadow and the world looks more beautiful through tinted glasses. Everybody looks 10 years younger, that is why I always wear dark glasses.”

—Karl Lagerfeld



as one of the most influential designers of the late 20th century and has collaborated with prominent couture houses such as Chloé, Fendi and Chanel. The Karl Lagerfeld Eyewear collection is designed to capture his powerful fashion spirit, refined technique and superior craftsmanship. Designed in partnership with legendary eyewear designers, Christian Roth and Eric Domège, the Karl Lagerfeld collection combines excellent craftsmanship and iconic design elements with a modern sensibility.

“Mr. Lagerfeld himself was a great inspiration. Without sunglasses he feels

naked,” said Domège. “When you start with such a strong persona and connection to sun it becomes easier to find direction, but it is very important to offer a complete collection. Marchon is very strong in optical stores so we were able to integrate the sun and ophthalmic styles for a strong total collection.”

Standouts in the sun 22-piece collection include the KL108S, a feminine shield inspired by Lagerfeld’s passion for photography; the KL106S, Lagerfeld’s personal favorite, a mas-

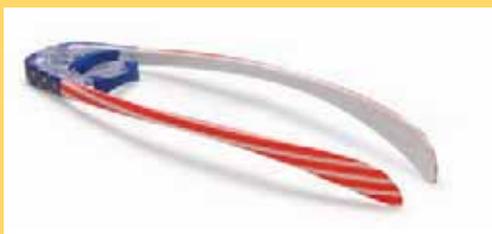
culine aviator detailed with a metal front and zyl temples; and the KL104S, a flat curved shield with metal and acetate temples engraved with a racing stripe and a shaded Karl Lagerfeld logo. The release of 17 optical styles for men and women will be launched at Vision Expo East.

The POP materials are done in shiny black with highly reflective silver mirror surfaces and come in a 4-piece frame display, 8-piece tower and 1-piece nameplate, as well as counter cards. The Karl Lagerfeld Eyewear collection is priced to the dispenser from \$79.50 to \$99.50. ■■



SECOND LOOK

Allison Releases Limited Edition Try Change American Wishbone



The complete Try Change Limited Edition American Wishbone set from Allison USA.



The American Wishbone set from Try Change and Allison USA on frame.

Change Wishbones, on any rimless, metal or plastic front frame and even on sunglasses, that are part of the Try Change collection.

The company has released this special wishbone not only for the U.S. market, but for anyone who wants to sport the “stars and stripes.”

The new limited edition, American-inspired, Try Change Wishbone from Allison USA is priced to the dispenser at \$24 each. ■■

MIAMI—Allison USA further expands their Try Change collection of interchangeable temples and bridges with the American Wishbone Limited Edition collection.

The Try Change line is a frame collection that allows the wearer to change the temple and bridge covers as often as they change their outfit with a simple click. According to the company, given the great success the initial Try Change launch experienced in the U.S. they have released this new 4,000 piece limited edition American Wishbone collection here.

The new Wishbone color, an American flag printed temples and matching blue bridge piece, can be assembled, as all Try

SECOND LOOK

Eastern States Eyewear Dispatches New Police Styles

ELMONT, N.Y.—Eastern States Eyewear has released the Police 2008 sunglass collection and an accompanying program titled the Law and Reorder program.

“We are extremely pleased with this new release,” said Paul Shyer, president of Eastern States Eyewear. “The styling is ideal for those seeking edgy, trendy fashion in their eyewear, this includes several RX-able styles as well.”

The new additions contain an array of cutting edge, high fashion styles with a wide assortment of shapes, ranging from progressive shields to RX-able aviators and rectangles. Design details include open temple and end piece designs, metal studs, and side shields to enhance the design of each frame. The Police “Gothic P” logo graces several of the models, while many of the styles feature polarized and mirrored lenses.

The accompanying promotion, titled The Law and Reorder Program, offers buyers and dispensers a wide assortment of valuable gifts from Police’s line of leather goods, jewelry, and watches. They can also learn how to receive customer friendly benefits for taking part in the program.

Point of purchase materials include a standing 24-piece floor display, a 3-piece countertop display, counter cards and posters. The 2008 Police sunglass collection is priced to the dispenser from \$115 to \$145. ■■



POP featuring style S8178 from the 2008 Police sunglass collection from Eastern States Eyewear.

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SECOND LOOK

Oliver Goldsmith Adds New Styles

LONDON—Oliver Goldsmith releases 10 new frames into the Classic Collection from their archive using a new medley of Mazzuchelli acetates.

Since 1926, the Oliver Goldsmith brand has graced the faces of the famous like Grace Kelly, Audrey Hepburn, Michael Caine and Sophia Loren. The brand was internationally re-launched in 2005 by Claire Goldsmith, Oliver Goldsmith's great granddaughter. Reborn for the 21st Century, the label has proved equally popular with today's stars and has been worn by Kylie Minogue, Jude Law, Jessica Simpson and Gwyneth Paltrow.

The Berwick in cranberry quartz (top) and the Fred in black (bottom) from the Oliver Goldsmith Classic Collection.

This season, the Classic Collection continues to grow with over 30 styles now available as Goldsmith releases 10 more styles from the family's private archive, the exact designs of which are recreated by the world's most skilled craftsmen. This 2008 collection includes the classic 1958 Strand and the Peter Sellers classic Fred from 1957.

Goldsmith has also assembled new talent to carry the company forward, including avant-garde Dublin designer Brian McGinn, as creative director. In 2008, they plan to introduce the first new designs since the company's re-launch.

The Oliver Goldsmith Classic Collection is priced to the dispenser from \$135 to \$145. ■■

SECOND LOOK

Essilor Intros Comfort in 1.67, 1.60

DALLAS—Essilor of America is releasing Varilux Comfort 360° lenses in Thin&Lite 1.67 and Thin&Lite 1.60 high-index material. These new lens offerings will also be available with Crizal Avancé with Scotchgard Protector.

Varilux Comfort 360° lenses in Thin&Lite 1.67 and Thin&Lite 1.60 will offer wearers greater comfort and performance in a thinner and lighter lens, according to Essilor. Thin&Lite 1.67 lenses are up to 34 percent thinner and 32 percent lighter than 1.50 plastic lenses and up to three times flatter than 1.50 plastic lenses for myopes. Easy to mount and edge, Thin&Lite 1.60 lenses are up to 30 percent thinner and 20 percent lighter than 1.50 plastic lenses.

Last fall, Essilor updated Varilux Comfort with 360° digital surfacing process, giving patients sharper vision with wider fields. The lens design also delivers easy patient adaptation and ease of fitting.

Varilux Comfort 360° lenses in Thin&Lite 1.67 and Thin&Lite 1.60 are available with Crizal Avancé with Scotchgard Protector are available in the following specifications:
Thin&Lite 1.67 Clear: Rx Range -12.00 to +8.00D, up to -4.00D cylinder; add power +0.75 to +3.50D; 1.75, 4.00, 5.50, 7.25, 8.50 base curves.

Thin&Lite 1.60 Clear: Rx Range: -12.00 to +8.00D up to -4.00D cylinder; add power: +0.75 to +3.50D; 1.75, 4.00, 5.50, 7.25, 8.00 base curves.

Varilux Comfort 360° lenses in Thin&Lite 1.67 and Thin&Lite 1.60 will also be available with Transitions VI later this year. ■■



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LAUNCHES

Sàfilo Unveils Jimmy Choo Sunwear

By Deirdre Carroll
Associate Editor

“We feel the launch of Jimmy Choo eyewear is perfectly timed to take advantage of the brand's growing importance and awareness in the U.S. luxury market.”
—Dick Russo, Sàfilo



The Lou in green (top) and the Rock in black (bottom) from the new Jimmy Choo sun collection from the Sàfilo Group.

PARSIPPANY, N.J.—Jimmy Choo introduces its first ever sunglass collection created in collaboration with the Sàfilo Group, a range of glamorous, sophisticated styles inspired by vintage frames with a modern edge.

“Jimmy Choo is a name synonymous with luxury and glamour. The brand’s infamous shoe collection, favored by Hollywood’s leading ladies for years, has made a huge impact on the female consumer in the U.S. and abroad,” said Dick Russo, executive vice president of Sàfilo USA. “As the brand continues to grow even stronger with new product category introductions, we feel the launch of Jimmy Choo eyewear is perfectly timed to take advantage

of the brand's growing importance and awareness in the U.S. luxury market. The collection will have a modern edge, with a vintage feel, which is reflective of the eyewear trends going forward.”

The collection contains 16 sunwear styles for women, including nine plastic and two plastic/metal combinations. Oversized, vintage-inspired, glam plastic shapes with sophisticated details comprise the majority of the collection, while a metal aviator and shield round it out. Metal styles come in tones of black, dark ruthenium, gold bronze and rose brown, while plastic styles include tones of black, brown, havana, gray, brown/deep red and champagne. Logos highlight the brand’s modern day design elements,

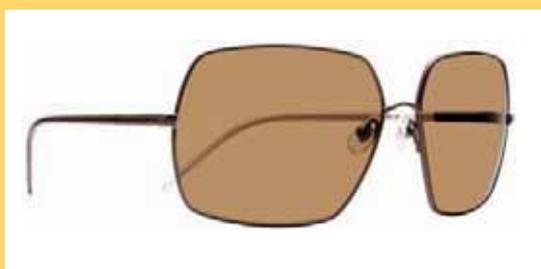
such as an oval metal ring, small visible studs and a round logo plaque.

Standouts include the Boo and Kat, edgy, oversized frames translated in black tortoiseshell, gold and silver. The Charley is a contemporary aviator with delicate stud detail, while the JJ frame features a sinuous shape wrapping around the face in a knotted “snake” effect, a detail echoed in Jimmy Choo’s sandals. Ornate oval hinges add glamour to the refined Lou frame offered in tortoiseshell, rose gold, dusky grey and rich brown. The Rock, designed for a sophisticated, strong woman, is a chic square frame embellished with Swarovski crystal studs reflecting the detail on many iconic Jimmy Choo bags.

Marketing for the collection includes trade and consumer advertising, as well as a logo plaque, counter mat (for optical accounts only), 1-place highlighter, 3-place and 10-place displays and a mirror. The Jimmy Choo sunglass collection is priced to the dispenser between \$140 and \$205. ■

SECOND LOOK

OSA International Premieres New Blinde Collection



The C'mon sunglass frame from Blinde and OSA International.

ALISO VIEJO, Calif.—OSA International has released the new Blinde collection for Vision Expo East.

The new collection represents both the classic Blinde look of clean wearable shapes in great colors with the signature 6-pin rivet hinge; as well as an introduction to some new pieces that feature a more underground cutting-edge style.

Blinde has introduced three new custom colors. Capitalizing on the strength of tortoise, two new tortoisés are being utilized, a blue crystal-infused tortoise and a classic Tokyo tortoise with rich, deep brown and caramel tones. To complement Blinde’s feminine retro shapes, a new solid burgundy color reminiscent of the bold color of the 1970’s is being used.

New oversized women’s retro-inspired pieces have been added to the sun collection. They have also created two new men’s sun pieces featuring aluminum fronts and titanium temples with the signature Blinde pin flex hinge and hand made zyl temple tips for comfort. The aluminum has been revived from the Blinde archives as a complement to the retro direction of the collection. All of the styles come in custom zyl colorations and feature either CR39 lenses with a three layer AR coating, mineral glass or glass polarized lenses with a five layer AR coating, hydrophobic coating and anti-scratch hard coat.

The ophthalmic group also features custom colors, as well as the signature pin flex hinge system and several styles with a modernized keyhole bridge.

The Blinde collection from OSA International is priced to the dispenser between \$95 and \$165. ■

SECOND LOOK

Younger Offers Image Wrap PAL

TORRANCE, Calif.—Younger Optics is launching its Image progressive lens in a new decentered design for steeply wrapped frames. The new lens, known as the Image Wrap, is offered in polycarbonate NuPolar Gray. Younger recommends it for people with active lifestyles who typically wear sporty, wrap frames.

Explaining the need for the new decentered design, David Rips, president and CEO of Younger Optics, noted that “Standard progressive designs often do not offer enough lens material for wrap sunframes. As every lab technician knows, when the lens doesn’t ‘cut out,’ it becomes a real headache for the laboratory and the doctor, as they must decide whether to change the frame or progressive lens style. Either way, it spells trouble that can result in lost business and a lot of aggravation for everyone. No one likes having to go back to the patient and tell them that they can’t have what they want. Younger now offers a better solution.”

Image Wrap is available in +8.00 base. The lens is decentered 7mm to allow for maximum cut-out opportunity. The effective blank size is 83mm. No secondary calculations are necessary for use, according to Younger.

Rips added that the Image progressive design is well-suited for narrow PDs. In addition, it features one of the widest distance zones in the industry, making it a good choice for sunwear. “Many of today’s progressive designs do not perform well as prescription sunwear,” said Rips. “Image was designed with sunwear in mind, with an emphasis on maintaining clear unobstructed distance vision.” ■



New Image Wrap features a decentered design for steeply wrapped frames.

SECOND LOOK

“Play Everyday” With Vogue Eyewear



An ad image from the “Play Everyday” advertising campaign featuring Gisele Bündchen for Vogue Eyewear.



The V03635SB part of the new Spring/Summer 2008 Vogue sunglass collection from Luxottica.

PORT WASHINGTON, N.Y.—Luxottica and Vogue Eyewear release their Spring/Summer 2008 sunglass collection and advertising campaign featuring Gisele Bündchen called “Play Everyday.”

“We are so thrilled that Gisele has decided to once again proudly represent the brand. The collection is fun, glamorous and friendly; just like Gisele. Her and the Vogue brand are a perfect match,” said Vittorio Verdun, vice president of marketing for Luxottica.

According to Luxottica, the 2008 collection is practical, fun, fresh and accessible with designs and prices that make it easy to buy.

Highlights of the new styles include the V03635SB, a lightweight shield with a deep square eye shape and crystals on the temple; the midsized V02516 SB, a modified square zyl frame; and the V03640SB, a rimmed shield with a metal star shape cut out on the temple outlined with crystals.

In the “Play Everyday” campaign Gisele Bündchen, is once again the face of Vogue, photographed by Mario Testino.

The Vogue Spring/Summer 2008 sunglass collection is priced to the dispenser from \$34 to \$59. ■■

SECOND LOOK

John Varvatos New Sunglasses



V727 in black and tobacco horn (top) and the V732 in brown horn/brown and tan (bottom) from John Varvatos.

NEW YORK—John Varvatos blends vintage details and high fashion with the introduction of 14 new men’s optical and sunglass styles at Vision Expo East. Featuring fine milling, two-toned metal colors and updates to classic styles, seven new optical and seven sun styles are being offered.

Style V727, available in black, brown horn and tobacco horn takes the classic aviator from sporty to luxurious by incorporating a hand-milled acetate eye ring and adding sculpted end pieces.

Style V729, available in gold/silver, shiny dark gunmetal and silver features two-tone metal colors and contemporary open bridge construction.

Style V732, available in brown horn/brown, gray crystal, tan features

wide temples recombined and a flat front profile with beveled inner temples.

Style V317 combines the best of the past with new front shapes that clearly place these frames in the new millennium.

The John Varvatos Collection from Base Curve is priced to the dispenser between \$110 and \$130. ■■

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fashion

By Deirdre Carroll

F.Y.EYE

His first women's collection for Theory hit in Spring 2006 and in 2007 he collaborated with L'Amey America to create the company's first line of eyewear, also the company's first licensed category. F.Y.Eye sat down with the designer to get his take on these company firsts in the world of fashion and design.

1 What are the most important influences on your design work?
I am greatly influenced by the arts and my environment; art, architecture, drawing, the energy of the streets, sculpture. In terms of eyewear, I was particularly influenced by the concept and style of Spanish architect, Santiago Calatrava and Japanese architect, Tadao Ando.

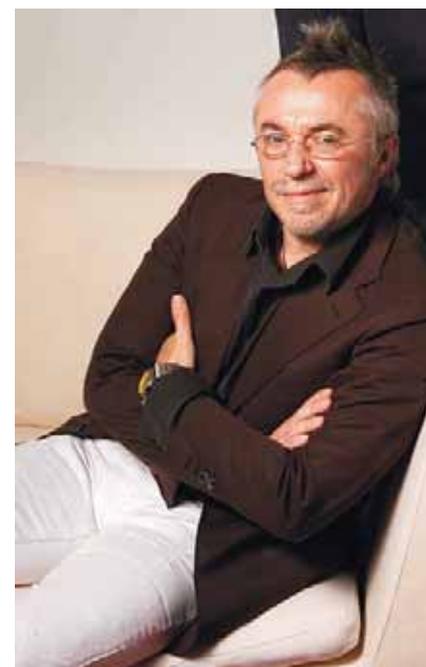
2 What excites you most about design?

I love the idea that each opportunity to design presents a unique chance to re-create and re-imagine that which may already exist and make it completely new and relevant. It is about coming up with solutions. In terms of fashion, the process is an exploration in both function and style.

3 Describe the ultimate Theory man and woman.
Someone who understands design itself and knows how to use it to create his or her own style. Intelligence is key, as is confidence. They are lead-

ers, trend setters, rule breakers. They are sophisticated and have their own sense of style.

4 What's been the greatest challenge in interpreting the Theory design philosophy into an eyewear line?
Theory's founding philosophy stresses fit and fabric quality, so the challenge was to translate that from cloth to the materials of the eyewear. The goal was to emphasize silhouette and to keep the design subtle, using great silhouette, modern fabrications, and a touch of glamour.



5 What are some of your favorite pieces or characteristics of the eyewear collections?

I love the big oversized glasses, the aviators, the colorations, the proportions, the plastic and metal combinations.

6 What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?
Be yourself. ■

LAUNCHES

L'Amey America Launches Theory Eyewear

By Deirdre Carroll
 Associate Editor

WILTON, Conn.—L'Amey America introduces Theory Eyewear, a collection of women's ophthalmic and sunglass frames, in keeping with in the Theory's modern aesthetic.

"The Theory eyewear collection will do for the optical market what it has done so successfully for the apparel market; it will reach the fashion-savvy, luxury consumer who seeks the sophis-

icated, understated style of contemporary design," said Stephen Rappoport, president of L'Amey America. "Theory perfectly complements our portfolio of brands. It further extends and enhances the range of high-quality, fashion-forward brands that we are committed to offering our customers."

Started in 1997, Theory today constitutes a \$600 million plus business. Popular in the U.S. and Japan, the company, owned by Link International, is continuing to expand into the worldwide market, opening stores in Europe and continuing to expand its wholesale presence across the world.

"Theory was founded on the principles of innovation, quality and integrity," said Andrew Rosen, president and founder of Theory. "We believe that the eyewear embodies our signature aesthetic, while maintaining our core values of fit and quality. Just as with our clothes, the

"The Theory eyewear collection will do for the optical market what it has done so successfully for the apparel market; it will reach the fashion-savvy, luxury consumer who seeks the sophisticated, understated style of contemporary design."

—Stephen Rappoport, L'Amey America



shapes are sexy and the fit is perfect."

The 24-piece Theory collection focuses on the brand's core values of innovation, fit and material quality that is never overdesigned, revealing a look that is clean and minimal. The frames feature richly hued and translucent acetate, artisan-brushed metal surfaces and a subtly-rendered logo signature, which is exclusive to this collection.

The ophthalmic collection consists of 12 styles, three colors each. Six styles are a combination of acetate and metal, including one semi-rimless design. Opaque colors include black, brown, tortoise and white; translucent hues are blue, grey and purple. The other six, full rim acetate styles reflect the post-modern retro-chic trend. Colors for the full rim models

include black, brown, tortoise and horn.

The sunwear collection also consists of 12 styles. The emphasis in this group is on its material integrity and its modern interpretation of retro styling. There are eight full rim models, both in round and square shapes, in highly polished black, brown, tortoise, horn and grey acetate or translucent black striped, blue, grey and purple. In metal, two styles of aviators and two styles of shields complete the collection.

POP includes a 6-piece display, countertop mirror, logo block and counter-card. All of the Theory Eyewear collection comes with a hard case and cleaning cloth and is priced to the dispenser between \$79.95 and \$99.95 for optical and \$80 and \$96 for sun. ■



The TH1111 ophthalmic frame in horn (top) and the TH2113 sun style in black stripe (bottom) part of the new Theory Eyewear collection from L'Amey America.

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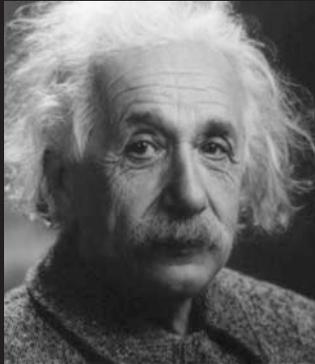


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LAUNCHES

Fusion Eyewear Launches Dutz Eyewear

By Deirdre Carroll
Associate Editor

PLAINVIEW, N.Y.—Fusion Eyewear will launch the Dutz Eyewear collection from the Netherlands during Vision Expo East in New York.



The 223 with panther temples (top) and the semi-rimless style 208 (bottom) from Dutz Eyewear.

“This fresh and vibrant collection with contrasting colors, smaller eye sizes and intricate temple work, will appeal to accounts servicing the high-end boutique market that Fusion has become synonymous with and at a very good price point.”

—Alan Weisfeld, Fusion Eyewear

“This fresh and vibrant collection with contrasting colors, smaller eye sizes and intricate temple work, will appeal to accounts servicing the high-end boutique market that Fusion has become synonymous with and at a very good price point. Fusion Eyewear is very excited about teaming up with

Roland and Armand who bring a new dimension to the Fusion family,” said Alan Weisfeld, the CEO of Fusion Eyewear.

The philosophy of the Dutz Dutch design team, Roland Vandermuelen and Armand Van Lingen, is to fuse high fashion with wearable shapes. The initial Dutz launch includes 16 ophthalmic styles for ladies and men, made of stainless steel and nickel-free stainless steel, with three



colors in each style.

The color palette for the collection is consistent with the Spring and Summer ‘08 fashion shows and uses bright yellows, reds, greens and purples, as a way to remain fresh yet timeless.

Optical standouts include model 223, a sleek full frame, two toned style featuring rectangular lenses with streamlined panther or giraffe temples.

The Dutz Model 208 featured a semi rimless frame with its detailed cut out circular shapes on the temples comes available in three color choices.

Point of purchase materials include cool and colorful counter cards and prism boxes. Each Dutz frame comes with an eye-popping bright orange and grey case and the collection is priced to the dispenser between \$159 and \$169. ■■



Dutz Eyewear marketing imagery distributed by Fusion Eyewear.

SECOND LOOK

Ic! Berlin Bows Two New Lines



The plastic ophthalmic style Neo (top) in just red and the metal Tassilo sun style (bottom) from ic! berlin.

BERLIN—ic! berlin, an eyewear company known for their innovative no screw hinge design, creative use of materials and irreverent marketing materials, releases two new collections for 2008.

The Basic Plastic! Collection is a totally new start for the company. The entire collection has been recreated with eight new ophthalmic models. The goal of re-designing the line was to achieve a clearly distinct image that was different than the high plastics to create a separate independent collection.

New models range from the daring, “big statement” expressions of 4-base designs, to the everyday casuals of 6-base styles, and are

made for those with a young, worldly lifestyle in mind. All of the faceting has been reworked to reveal pure, angular looks and even the color choices were made bold and direct in black, havanna, diamond, grey transparent glossy and, the company’s new color, “just red.” ic! berlin also unveils the Metallic! Sun Collection, featuring 10 new models. The new styles range from small and unpretentious to big-size attention getters. The metallic sun collection focuses on 6-base curves and glazed lenses, which makes them amazingly adaptable.

These two new collections from ic! berlin are priced to the dispenser at \$155 for the Basic Plastic! and between \$120 and \$145 for the Metallic! Sun collection. ■■

SECOND LOOK

Kenmark Adds New Optical Styles to República for Men

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—The Kenmark Group has added eight optical frames into its República Eyewear Collection for men.

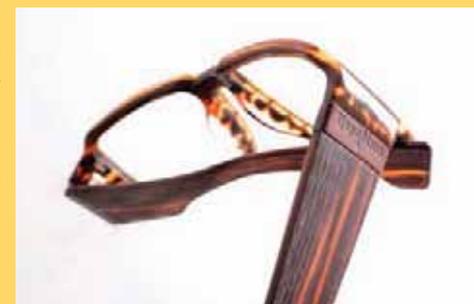
The Frankfurt, available in black, olive and tortoise, features a zyl square shaped frame front with textured temples and a República logo plaque end piece. The Istanbul, in black, gold and gunmetal, showcases an oversized frame with metal triple bar top construction and zyl temples.

The Macoris, in black, brown and gunmetal, is a rectangular metal nylon rimless/zyl frame with a stamped metal República logo and graphic design elements, while the Mumbai, in black, olive and tortoise, features a unique metal/zyl top bar construction that flows into a temple design for a comfortable fit.

The Quito, available in black, brown and gunmetal, is a rimless frame with patterned temple and metal República logo stamped in the temple tips and the Sacramento, in black, olive and tortoise, features a zyl frame with a unique keyhole bridge design and textured temples.

Lastly, the Shanghai, in black, brown and gunmetal, highlights a dynamic metal/zyl frame with a thick metal end piece and matching temples, whereas the Tokyo, in black, brown and olive, is a rectangular frame with full zyl construction and matching temples.

The República Eyewear Collection from Kenmark is priced to the dispenser between \$56.95 and \$58.95. ■■



The Frankfurt ophthalmic frame in tortoise from the República Eyewear Collection by Kenmark.

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LAUNCHES

Augen Optics Intros 8mm Short-Corridor Lens

PETALUMA, Calif.—Augen Optics, based here, is launching the Centurion Short Corridor Progressive lens on April 10. The lens features a 12mm minimum fitting height and an 8mm corridor length (measured from 10 percent to 90 percent of prescribed add power), making it the shortest corridor PAL currently

on the market. With its extra-wide reading area, generous distance zone and soft periphery, the Augen Centurion Short Corridor Progressive is designed for quick and easy adaptation and maximum comfort during all-day wear, according to Augen.

“We set out to design a progressive lens with the shortest possible corridor to give wearers maximum flexibility in choosing the smaller frames that are prevalent today,” according to John Potočný, Augen’s vice president, sales and marketing.

“At the same time, we didn’t want to make any compromise in the quality of vision. So we concentrated on maximizing the near and distance zones while placing less emphasis on the intermediate area, giving presbyopes the wide and clear reading and distance vision they expect even in smaller frames.”

The Augen Centurion Short Corridor Progressive design incorporates a soft periphery that virtually eliminates swim,



The Centurion Short Corridor Progressive lens from Augen Optics.

“We believe the Augen Short Corridor Progressive will give eyecare practitioners greater confidence in fitting presbyopes in even the smallest frames so popular today.”

—Dick Kapash, Augen



providing wearers with a greater sense of visual freedom and comfort in the lens, according to Augen, which added that the design also uses precision asymmetry to ensure excellent binocular vision.

“With this launch we’re pleased to add another premium product to our focused product line,” commented Dick Kapash, president of Augen. “Our objective at Augen is to provide profit opportunities to our customers with an exclusive inventory of premium lens products that target industry trends.”

“We believe the Augen Short Corridor Progressive will give eyecare practitioners greater confidence in fitting presbyopes in even the smallest frames so pop-

ular today, knowing they’re still providing the expansive vision wearers are looking for in a very comfortable lens.”

The Augen Short Corridor Progressive is part of the Centurion series of lenses available from Augen, which includes the company’s most premium designs. All Centurion Series lenses are produced using Augen’s proprietary free-form processing technology, resulting in “high definition” lenses that deliver the precise design characteristics intended by the lens design team.

The Augen Centurion Short Corridor Progressive is available in Trivex and Trivex Transitions VI in +0.75 to +3.50 add powers. ■■

SECOND LOOK

I-dealoptics Hits the Jackpot With the Casino Collection

DETROIT—i-dealoptics has updated their Casino collection with nine new stainless and acetate looks.

Designed as a high style collection made with quality materials at a budget price, i-dealoptics expands on the original four styles of the Casino collection by infusing stain-



The Tatum (top) and the Mia (bottom) part of the expanded Casino collection from i-dealoptics.

less steel and fresh color combinations into this mid-priced budget line. Starting with two combination looks, the Alex frame features a stainless front and acetate temples in neutral tones of black, brown, and gunmetal.

The Andrea style turns things around with a layered acetate front and stainless temples in burgundy/pink, chocolate/teal, black/marble, and brown. The Kayla, Logan, and Tatum are all stainless steel semi-rimless styles with wider temples for a bold contemporary look in colors like basic shades of black, brown, and gun, as well as brighter neutrals like copper, wine, and dusty rose.

Rounding out the metals is a group of triple-layered acetates. The Mia, Lily, and Brooke make color the focal point with combinations that include brown/mint, cinnamon/blue, sandalwood and sage.

Sizes for the Casino collection from i-dealoptics range from 50 to 53 and each of the frames are priced to the dispenser at \$12.99. ■■

SECOND LOOK

A&A Optical Adds New Jalapenos Sol Styles for Spring



The Byely (top) and the Daun (bottom) from the Jalapenos Sol Collection by A&A Optical.

DALLAS—A&A Optical has added four new Jalapenos Sol sun styles for Spring 2008.

A welcome addition to the 20 styles already available to men and women, the new styles, Byely, Daun, Paan and Gola, all include CR39 UV400 lenses offering UV protection and visual clarity.

The Byely has an opaque acetate body with a metal bar at the temple and glitter detail inside for a high fashion look, while the Daun, a wrap style in chocolate with orange or onyx with pink, is an acetate design with multiple laminate inside contrasting with an intricate laser etched tile pattern design outside.

Swarovski crystals and silver studs accent the Paan, available in onyx and tortoise, a double laminate acetate frame for women with spring hinges for durability and hold. Lastly, the Gola, available in two distinctive hues, coca and onyx highlights a laser etched reptile pattern on the end piece and a multi laminate temple while incorporating an oversized oval shape for women who want a big fashion look.

The Jalapenos Sol Collection from A&A Optical is priced to the dispenser at \$49.95. ■■

LAUNCHES

AIT Debuts Updated Measurement System

BENSENVILLE, Ill.—AIT, a member of the Indo group, will show a new and improved version of its patient measurement system, The Center, at International Vision Expo. The Center, developed by Indo, is designed to make dispensing easier and more accurate, according to AIT. The unit automatically measures patient pupillary distance and height as well as vertex distance and pantoscopic frame angle. It utilizes a system of three built-in cameras and infrared LEDs to obtain three-dimensional patient measurements.

The Center operates with a connected PC that allows users to organize and store individual measurements using a simple Windows interface. It is especially useful when fitting conventional or free-form progressive lenses, AIT reported. The new version of The Center offers a friendlier user interface than previous versions and allows a user to superimpose a progressive design on the screen to

insure proper cutout, fit and frame choice. ■■



AIT's patient measurement system, The Center, is designed to make dispensing easier and more accurate.

SECOND LOOK

Younger Optics Intros Drivewear FT



TORRANCE, Calif.—Younger Optics has recently expanded its Drivewear line by adding a flat-top 28 in hard resin.

"Our Drivewear customers have been asking for a flat-top since Drivewear was released, and Younger is proud to be able to meet that need," said David Rips, president and CEO

of Younger Optics. Drivewear is also currently available in hard resin plano, single-vision and Younger's Image progressive.

Drivewear lenses combine Transitions Photochromic Technology and Younger's NuPolar polarization. Designed specifically to meet the visual demands of driving, Drivewear is the first polarized photochromic lens to darken behind the windshield of a car, which allows Drivewear lenses to change color based on current driving conditions in order to enhance the driver's vision. In addition, Drivewear lenses are polarized to block blinding glare.

In other news, Younger Optics now offers two videos with information on Drivewear lenses: a 60-second looping video for the patient waiting room, and a three-minute Drivewear training video for eyecare professionals. The first explains the benefits of Drivewear technology at the consumer level, showing and explaining how Drivewear lenses react in real life situations, from driving in overcast and daylight conditions to boating and bike riding outdoors in bright light conditions. The second adds important information about complimentary marketing materials available through Younger. Both videos come in DVD format, and are offered at no charge. ■■

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LIME



A backside anti-reflective coating (eliminates annoying reflections) is provided as part of the package, complete with a super-premium hydrophobic/oleophobic topcoat making the lenses easier to clean and keep clean - even if you're not planning to stay that way yourself.

RED



Opticote goes to Rxtreme measures to bring your consumer a Mirror Coating that excels in every way. No matter what your activity is; mountain biking, rock climbing, snow sports, fishing, tennis or golf, performance and durability is the expectation.

GOLD



For more information call (800) 248-6784 or visit www.opticote.com

LEMON



SECOND LOOK

Vision-Ease Expands Coppertone Line



RAMSEY, Minn.—Vision-Ease Lens is rounding out its Coppertone polarized lens line with the addition of a new gray color, lens availability in Illumina, single-vision and D28 styles and a summer sun season promotion to support the full launch of Coppertone polarized lenses.

"Vision-Ease Lens is continually looking for ways to boost our product offerings and provide quality eye protection," said Barry Resnik, director of marketing, Vision-Ease Lens. "Now,

with the HEV gray color, brown color and full lens style additions, the Coppertone lens brand is the total package in sun protection for consumers."

In addition, Vision-Ease kicked-off a new promotion, "Sell Sun, Win Fun," on March 1. The promotion, which runs through June 30, offers ECPs monthly prizes for selling Coppertone polarized lenses. The program provides ECPs with a scratch-and-earn card for every pair of Coppertone polarized lenses sold allowing them to earn up to 20 dollars instantly. The secret code is verifiable online at www.vision-ease.com for summer recreation monthly prizes.

"Through the 'Sell Sun, Win Fun' promotion, Vision-Ease Lens is continuing to grow its relationships with ECPs," said Dominique Jara, marketing manager, Vision-Ease Lens. "Providing knowledge about eye sun protection and offering the trusted name of Coppertone builds ECPs' customer base, credibility and overall business."

The "Sell Sun, Win Fun" monthly prizes include a Sunfish Sailboat, a Yamaha WaveRunner and a kayak package for two. The grand prize drawing is a trip for four to the Atlantis Resort on Paradise Island, Bahamas. ■■

SECOND LOOK

Cachet Offers New Chloe Sunglasses for Spring



WILTON, Conn.—Cachet, the luxury division of L'Amey America, has launched for Spring 2008 four new Chloe sunglass styles that continue the Chloe theme of femininity and elegance marked by an edgy, subtle spirit.

The new styles play with muted colors and retro-inspired forms that complement Chloe's ready-to-wear collection.

The Havenia group features retro-themed metal sunglasses with thick fronts and temples that vary in depth for added dimension. The two styles incorporate contrasting colors in the front and temples, while rivets add toughness.

The two new Mimosa frames are directly inspired by the Chloe button in the accessories line. The frame features a metal rim layered between two different colored acetates which complement the ready-to-wear color card. Each model has a 6-base and CR39 lenses.

The new Chloe Havenia and Mimosa sunglasses from L'Amey America's Cachet division are priced to the dispenser from \$105 to \$115. ■■

The Havenia CL2142C01 sunglasses (top) and the Mimosa CL2147C02 sunglasses (bottom) from Chloe and Cachet.

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LAUNCHES

Sutro, a Fresh Look at Eyewear

By Deirdre Carroll
Associate Editor

SAN FRANCISCO—Sutro Vision, a new independent luxury brand based here, has launched their first sun collection which takes a fresh look at conventional eyewear construction.

Sutro grew out of the collaboration of

friends, Tony Guerrero, Amani King and Jeff Sand, who grew up immersed in the San Francisco skateboard, snowboard and music scenes and whose backgrounds prior to launching Sutro had very little to do with the eyewear industry.

The decision to make eyewear came from their frustration with not finding a brand that had product they respected and an image they identified with. “We’re at a point now in our lives where we really appreciate quality and good design,” said King, director of marketing and brand direction. “We saw a real opportunity to create a brand built around superior product with an image we connect with.”

“Our goal is ambitious, to build a brand around quality, long term,” added Guer-

“Our goal is ambitious, to build a brand around quality, long term. We are striving to make an item that is precious, the thing that you make sure you take care of.”

—Tony Guerrero, Sutro Vision



rero. “There are too many disposable items in the world these days. We are striving to make an item that is precious, the thing that you make sure you take care of. Building a quality product that lasts and doesn’t need to be replaced in two weeks is the original ‘green’ idea.”

“Many of the design conventions in the eyewear industry are merely ‘good enough’ solutions,” said Sand, product designer, who has created everything from bicycle components and snowboard bindings to modern furniture and holds over a dozen U.S. patents. “Through better design and sourcing of non-traditional materials we’ve been able to eliminate many common flaws.”

An example is the patent pending Sutro Ratchet Hinge, a stainless steel

ratcheting hinge that is integrated into the frame for heightened strength and durability. The ratchet keeps the frame closed when hanging from a shirt pocket and allows the use of a lighter more comfortable spring. The company is so confident in the design of their hinge they offer a lifetime warranty on it.

The Sutro collection is priced to the dispenser between \$107 and \$122. ■



The Guerrero (top) and Simone (bottom) from Sutro Vision.



SECOND LOOK

Opticote Debuts ‘Rxtreme Mirror’



Opticote’s Rxtreme Mirror lenses come standard with backside AR coating

FRANKLIN PARK, III.—Opticote, the Chicago-area coating lab, is introducing Rxtreme Mirror, a new collection of prescription mirror coatings that incorporates performance and fashion features.

Designed for patients who enjoy sports and other outdoor activities, Rxtreme Mirror is available

in silver, red, gold, blue, lime and lemon. The coating is applied only to colored or polarized polycarbonate, a lens material known for superior impact resistance.

To produce Rxtreme lenses, Opticote starts with a process that makes its coating four times harder than standard mirrors, so it’s virtually impossible to scratch or wear off, according to Michael Bellomo, director of sales and marketing for the lab. Backside anti-reflective coating is provided as part of the package, complete with a super-premium hydrophobic/oleophobic topcoat that makes the lenses easy to clean and easy to keep clean.

“What makes us different than other people we offer this complete system,” Bellomo noted. “We added a mirror coating to enhance performance of polarized lens, then we add AR and premium top coat.”

“Opticote goes to Rxtreme measures to bring your consumer a Mirror Coating that excels in every way. No matter what your activity is—mountain biking, rock climbing, snow sports, fishing, tennis or golf—performance and durability is the expectation, and Rxtreme delivers those qualities,” he said. ■

SECOND LOOK

ProDesign Intros the 4th Dimension

SAN FRANCISCO—ProDesign Denmark will release their latest collection, 4th Dimension, designed with a marked sporty and trendy aesthetic at the International Vision Expo East in New York.

The 4th Dimension frames are larger than normally seen in ProDesign collections and many feature Aviator or McArthur frame shapes constructed in titanium. The collection offers four distinctly masculine shapes, the 4349, 4350, 4351 and 4352, each available in six colors. The 4349 and 4350 come in two different sizes.

The sole decoration on the frames is a simple unbroken line on the edge of the rim and temples in a contrasting color which help give the frames a light and slim look and can only be seen when looking at the wearer from a different angle than directly. Adding to the sporty feel of the frames is the attention to detail shown in the end tips, which have been cut diagonally.

The titanium 4th Dimension series from ProDesign Denmark is priced to the dispenser at \$119.95. ■



4th Dimension frames from ProDesign Denmark.

SECOND LOOK

Match Launches Helium Paris Sun

MINEOLA, N.Y.—Match Eyewear will introduce the Helium Paris Sunwear collection for the first time at Vision Expo East.

“The Helium Paris Sunwear collection captures the edgy, cool spirit of today’s active lifestyle,” said Ethan Goodman, president of Match Eyewear. “With its racy styling combined with the use of polarized lenses, Helium Paris offers the consumer the best of both worlds in French fashion non-sport sunglasses.”

In addition to releasing over 30 new ophthalmic styles, Helium Paris releases its six- to eight-piece sunwear collection built on edgy, dramatic designs, along with the technical addition of polarized lenses for added sun protection. The sun collection consists of full metal, metal and acetate, and full acetate styles and the bold use of design and color.

With the combination of polarized lenses in fashion frames, the Helium Paris brand provides benefits to the wearer that is typically reserved for sport frames, including UV protection and polarization.

From the modified aviators with diamond stone treatment on the lenses, to acetates with stone logo treatments, like their ophthalmic counterparts, the look is edgy.

Merchandising materials include counter cards, 24” X 36” posters and EVA cases branded with the Helium Paris logo. The Helium Paris sunwear collection is priced to the dispenser between \$65 and \$75. ■■



The 9004 on woman (left) and the 9905 (right) on man from the new Helium Paris sun collection from Match Eyewear.

SECOND LOOK

Guess Debuts Two New Groupings



The GU 1511 in brown (top), GU 1512 black (middle), and GU 1513 in burgundy (bottom) from Guess by Viva International.

SOMERVILLE, N.J — Guess offers two new groupings, the “Captivating and Timeless” collection for women and the “Defined Expressions” collection for men.

The women’s Captivating and Timeless group consists of three styles. The refined GU1511 is available in black front/black marble temples, brown front/tortoise temples,

burgundy front/burgundy marble temples or light brown front/cream marble temples. The modified rectangular front of GU1512 creates a captivating look, while the GU1513 has a deeper rectangular frame front. Both are available in black with black marble temples, as well as burgundy, gray and tortoise.

The men’s Defined Expressions showcases well-defined features like the streamlined plastic top front bar with unique striping and metal rim combination of the GU 1525, available in black with gunmetal temples, crystal and white stripe with silver temples, and tortoise with brown temples. The color combinations highlight the tapered temples detailed with matte and satin finishes. The GU1526, a semi-rimless design, is available in satin black, satin brown, gunmetal and silver, while the full-rimmed metal GU1527 comes in satin black, satin brown, gunmetal.

The Guess Collection from Viva is priced to the dispenser between \$52.95 and \$57.95. ■■



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LAUNCHES

Zeiss Releases New Customized PAL

DEL MAR, Calif.—At International Vision Expo, Carl Zeiss Vision will unveil SOLA HDV progressive lenses, which are each custom-created specifically for the individual patient's prescription and choice of frame.

Using proprietary Morphing Technology, SOLA HDV's corridor is custom-sized for the exact measurements of the patient's chosen frame, assuring full reading perform-



ance and maximum clear viewing zones for fitting heights of 13 to 35mm.

HD technology digitally optimizes the lens for the wearer's exact combination of sphere power, cylinder power, cylinder axis, add power and frame dimensions.

The result is what Zeiss calls "High Definition" vision: the largest areas of clear vision with the lowest unwanted astigmatism. ■■

Vigor Optical Adds UV Meter

CARLSTADT, N.J.—Vigor Optical is adding a new and improved UV meter to its line of tinting equipment. Easily calibrated, space saving and simple to use, the multimeter is designed to assist a dispenser with three valuable functions.

Foremost, the meter registers UV transmission. To assist the tinting technician, the meter has a "visible light mode" for tint density comparisons.

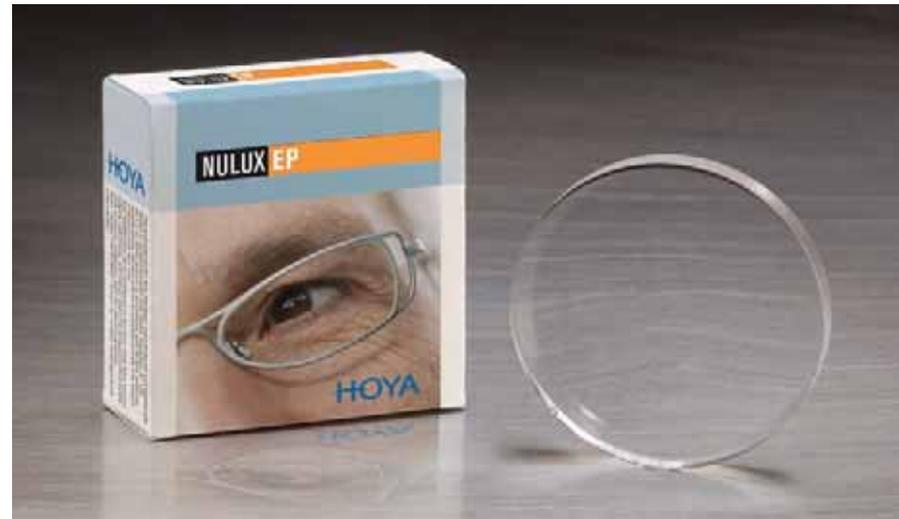
The meter's newest feature is the "photochromic demonstrator." The

photochromic mode allows the dispenser to show patients the clear-to-dark change features of variable transmission lenses. In one minute, a special light imitates sunlight and performs the darkening task. The photochromic demonstrator is especially helpful in an interior setting, such as a shopping mall or on cloudy days.

The ship weight of the unit is three pounds. It measures 5 inches high by 10 inches deep by 6 3/4" wide. ■■

LAUNCHES

Hoya Offers Bi Aspheric Single-Vision Lens



LEWISVILLE, Texas—Hoya Vision Care, North America is launching the Nulux EP Bi Aspheric Single Vision lens. The latest development in Hoya Free-Form Design Technology, the Nulux EP Bi Aspheric Single Vision lens offers clear vision from edge to edge, especially in oblique directions, according to Hoya.

The company's patented Calculated Visual Acuity Power Correction Technology takes into account design cus-

tomization across the entire surface of the lens through a point-by-point calculation, giving the Nulux EP Bi Aspheric Single Vision lens an enhanced level of performance. Wearers will experience superior visual performance in all directions of sight and crystal-clear vision, Hoya reported.

Nulux EP Bi Aspheric Single Vision lens is available in 1.67 Eynoa and 1.70 Eyry materials with Hoya Super HiVision systematically included. ■■

SECOND LOOK

Kirk Originals Adds More 'Shine'



The Jean in ivory from the Sunshine collection from Kirk Originals.

BRIGHTON, U.K.—Kirk Originals adds two new sun styles to their Shine collection, a line of '70s and '80s inspired frames in a bespoke range of glittery efferescent colors developed specifically for the collection.

The deep luminescence of this acetate was created by accident when designer Jason Kirk spilled a glass of juice on a frame and discovered it created a unique texture. The Shine collection's unique glimmer material was finalized after months of experimentation in a process that

entails dipping the acetate in a secret recipe of mixed herbs and citric acid.

The two new Sunshine frames added to the already four style strong collection, include the Jean and the Paulo which are available in gold, silver and ivory, this year's new color, an off white hue that contrasts dramatically with the light that radiates from within the frame.

Hand-made in France, the Sunshine Collection from Kirk Originals is priced to the dispenser at \$140. ■■

SECOND LOOK

Kata Scales the Urban Landscape With Spring '08 Collection

NEW YORK—This Spring Kata delivers four exciting new men's frames, three optical and one sun, all with intricate concave temple design.

In addition to the innovative concave temple concept, two Kata classics are reinvented with cutting-edge eye shapes. The strong lines of the Bolt temple concept are redefined in a weightless mount. The Bolt 6 style achieves the perfect balance of nature and architecture with its lightning-inspired temples and versatile three-piece design.



Styles Eyebeam 6 (top) and Eyebeam 7 (bottom) from the Kata Collection by Legacie.

Eyebeam 6 utilizes a lightweight nylon semi-rimless front to balance the bold temple, and the result is utterly masculine without the use of excessive material. Eyebeam 7 is a clean-cut navigator with understated sophistication.

The Kata Collection from Legacie is priced to the dispenser between \$125 and \$195. ■■



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LAUNCHES

Indo to Spotlight Free-form Solutions

BENSENVILLE, Ill.—Indo will be spotlighting its Free-form Solutions progressive lens designs at International Vision Expo. The designs are conceived to let optical labs market private label, top-of-the-line progressive lenses, according to Indo.

The company's Outdoors Design has been developed to improve performance



when practicing outdoor activities. This new design joins Office Design (con-

ceived for indoor working environments) and Road Design (conceived for driving) to complete the Action Designs specialized lens design family.

Likewise, the multi-purpose progressive lens designs family, Global Designs, is available in three different fitting heights: 22mm (Global 22), 19mm (Glob-

al 19) and 16mm (Global 16). FreeDesign, an ad hoc development based on the customer's requirements, allows differentiation and exclusive marketing to the lab.

All Free-form Solutions designs can be surfaced in standard plastic, 1.523, 1.6, 1.67, polycarbonate and Trivex, Indo reports. FreeForm Solutions is compatible with the main hardware platforms. ■

SECOND LOOK

Seiko Offers Three FSV Transitions Lenses



MAHWAH, N.J.—Seiko Optical Products of America is releasing three new finished single-vision lens products featuring Transitions VI technology. The lenses are offered in the following: Ultra-Thin 1.67, Diamond-Clear polycarbonate and Ultra 1.50 plastic.

"These products fill a widespread demand across all distribution channels for finished single-vision Transitions lenses," said Mike Rybacki, Seiko Optical senior vice president of sales and marketing. "Seiko Optical is the first manu-

facturer to offer these lenses in the three most popular indexes utilizing Transitions VI, the latest and most advanced photochromic technology from Transitions Optical."

The product range for the 1.67 index is -2.00 to -8.00D, and in polycarbonate +3.00 to -6.00D, both out to a -2.00 cylinder. Product range for 1.50 index is +3.00 to -4.00, to a -2.00 cylinder, with a total power of -4.00. ■

Seiko Intros Perfas Back Surface PAL

MAHWAH, N.J.—Also new from Seiko Optical is Perfas, a 100 percent, back surface progressive lenses. Three advanced designs are available in plastic, polycarbonate and high-index, in clear, polarized and Transitions.

Perfas lenses are custom made to patients' exact prescription, Seiko reported. The lenses eliminate front curve distortion and provide wider fields of view when compared to conventional progressive designs. ■

SECOND LOOK

Econo-Lite Targets Optical With "Green" Lighting Systems for Dispensaries

TAPPAN, N.Y.—Econo-Lite, a firm which makes lighting fixtures for jewelry stores, is now targeting optical retailers and ECPs with its services.

Established in 1980 and headed by co-presidents Jeff Gasman and Howard Gurock, the firm is a leading supplier of energy-efficient lighting systems.

The company's engineers have developed Vision390, a range of lighting fixtures for optical stores. These new lights, the company said, show off frames perfectly, without harsh glare and shadow, which allow customers to see themselves clearly.

The company explained that by employing state-of-the-art ceramic metal halide technology, "Vision390 produces lighting that is not only whiter but five times brighter than halogen. And, by eliminating yellow tones, these fixtures produce a crisp, clean light that is as close to natural light as possible."

In addition, Vision390 fixtures greatly reduce heat, are made to meet the strictest standards in the U.S., and are "green" with dramatic energy savings.

Cohen's Fashion Optical has been using the lights in its stores, the company noted. Robert Cohen, Cohen's Fashion Optical president, said, "These lights are an asset to any optical retailer. Our merchandise never looked better."

ECPs can try a light with no obligation by calling one of Econo-Lite's lighting professionals at (800) 345-9652 or emailing the company at info@econo-lite.com.

The firm will also be exhibiting at next month's Vision Expo East and will feature frames from French eyewear firm, Lafont, in its booth to highlight the lighting's benefits. ■

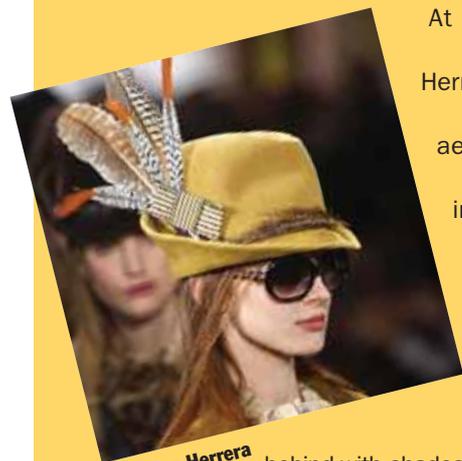


HIGH VISIBILITY



Betsey Johnson's "Beat Chick" collection was influenced by the beatnik era and was full of slick pieces balanced with subtle hints of a safari. Shades of scarlet red, chrome yellow, and cobalt blue popped paired with muted darks. The Fall 2008 collection also featured a retrospective of Betsey's favorite looks from the past 30 years and specially designed eyewear from **LEGACIE** in bright oversized cat-eyes and rounds...

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At the Carolina Herrera show, the aesthetic was inspired by the countryside. The designer left the city behind with shades borrowed from the fall landscape, like oatmeal brown, china blue and lemon-drop yellow. Sunglass style H732, an oval hand-

milled acetate, from the Carolina Herrera collection by **BASE CURVE**, debuted on the runway as well paired with a jaunty feather-accented, huntsman-style cap...

Mark Badgley and James Mischka channeled Bianca Jagger circa the 1970s for their Fall 2008 ready-to-wear collection, but they didn't stray too far into the era of free-love to scare off their loyal clientele who come to the duo for timeless clothes and gorgeous evening-wear. For those who feel they may not be able to pull off the large psychedelic floral prints and floppy hats, or designer-sized price tag, a little bit of fabulousness can be theirs by way of the Garbo and Marilyn sunglasses from the



Badgley Mischka



SAMA EYEWEAR.

Paper airplanes, of all things, helped inspire the Fall 2008 Proenza Schouler collection from designers Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez.

The accordion folds were apparent on jewel-toned dresses and jackets, while sunwear from the Proenza Schouler collection by Cachet, the luxury division of **L'AMY AMERICA**, also helped set the mood. Here, style sun PS5008 takes a stylish turn down the runway...

In other Proenza Schouler news, designers Jack McCollough and Lazaro Hernandez have been nominated again for the Council of Fashion Designers (CFDA) 2008 Womenswear Designer of the Year award. They have previously won the award in 2007, sharing honors with Oscar de la Renta. The CFDA Awards recognize the outstanding contributions to American fashion by individuals from all areas of the fashion industry and related arts...

The **COSTA DEL MAR U.** of Blue Tour is headed out on the road for the fourth



year in a row to visit four new college campuses. At every stop the decked out Airstream trailer will feature different local and national bands hosted by emcee Matt Eastman, star of TV's *Wanna Go Fishing* and tons of giveaways from sponsors like Costa Del Mar, Sperry, Emotion Kayaks, Guy Harvey and Pure Fishing. After hitting the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, N.C., on March 28, with band Badfish, the RV will hit Davidson College in Charlotte, N.C., on April 5 with Blue Moon

Swamp and Frontiers, Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Ga., on April 11 with Grayson Hill and Sister Hazel and the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, Ala., April 19 with Eric Church and The Marshall Tucker Band. Proceeds of the trip will benefit Trout Unlimited, the Coastal Conservation Association and BASS Conservation.



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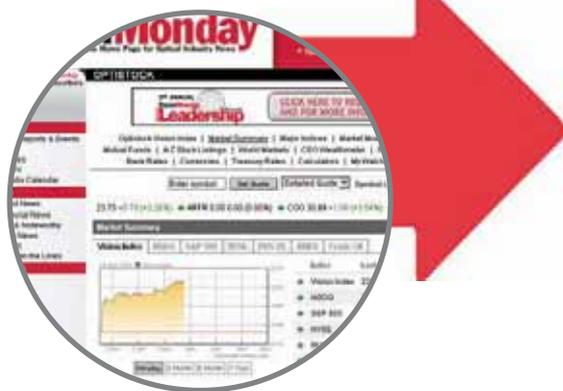


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SECOND LOOK

Astucci Bows Colorful New Cases

NEW YORK—Astucci U.S. Ltd. released its newest collection of eyewear cases featuring trend setting designs, modern shapes and a current array of fashion colors.

The new offerings include the IP717 eyewear pouch which comes in an exotic skin print glazed in a metallic finish available in a variety of colors. The unique zipper pull allows the case to be opened with ease, while the overall shape provides ample space to be used for glasses that are large or small.

The B9TG Twiggie case is an update on their classic "purse" handle eyewear case. It features a bold retro pattern in a range of popular colors along with a light weight construction. A flower zipper pull adds a touch of whimsy and practicality.

These new offerings from Astucci are priced to the dispenser between \$1.90 and \$3.85. ■■



The IP717 eyewear pouches (top) and the B9TG Twiggie eyewear "purse" from Astucci.

SECOND LOOK

Landon Lens Introduces CleARZone



NEW YORK—Landon Lens Manufacturing, based here, is introducing CleARZone anti-reflective coated, semi-finished plastic lenses. The 70mm lens is also available in single-vision in 2, 4, 6 and 8 bases, as well as flat-top bifocal and Channel 14 short-corridor

progressive designs in 4 and 6 base with +1.00 to +3.00 adds.

"This lens is perfect for anyone who has a generator," said company president Lenny Landon. "By stocking only four single-vision lenses, you can make an AR-coated lens in the time it takes to surface a lens—20 minutes. Compare this to the time it takes and the cost of shipping a lens to the coater and having it shipped back. Compare this to stocking 400 different finished, AR single-vision lenses, the number you will need to cover all bases, of which half will still be on your shelves five years from now."

CleARzone lenses feature a 1.499 index of refraction. Front side AR coating is standard. The lenses also have a tintable back side. Landon Lens guarantees them for 18 months. ■■

SECOND LOOK

New SALT.Optics Spring Line
Inspired by Organic Influences

Carly in Toffee Tort/Pink (left)
Cammie in Oatmeal Orchid (right)

COSTA MESA, Calif.—The spring 2008 optical and sunwear collections from SALT.Optics is inspired by elements found in nature.

Custom acetate colors such as the new style, Alex, in tweed moss or Cammie, in oatmeal orchid, add character to strong frame shapes.

Nicola, an updated aviator, featuring SALT's signature hardware has a slimmer profile with added width at the base of the temple.

SALT.Optics describes itself as an "Independent Lifestyle Company that creates premium handcrafted eyewear for individuals with a unique sense of style."

Sunwear styles feature what SALT terms [PFV] or "Prism-Free Vision Lens Technology," which results in better contrast, clarity and eye comfort for the wearer. Available in [PFV] Polarized in a range of colors from classic grey, brown, G-15 as well as rose, navel orange and pink, the materials—glass and CR-39—feature hydrophobic, AR and anti-scratch coatings.

SALT's optical frames range from \$85 to \$125 to the dispenser while the sunwear styles range from \$105 to \$140. ■■

SECOND LOOK

Opsales Introduces Shade
Control Polarized Clips

ISLAND PARK, N.Y.—Opsales is presenting Shade Control, sun clips equipped with proprietary Visionaries polarized lenses.

The collection consists of 54 clips in a wide variety of sizes and shapes that fit the vast majority of frames. The clips are made of high quality stainless steel and feature a spring-loaded mechanism and covered hooks. Clips are offered in black, bronze, gold and gunmetal. Lenses meet and exceed all international standards for Optics and UV polarizing efficiency and come in Copper Perception Driving, gray and brown. Perception mirror coatings will also be available Spring 2008, noted Jerry Bedingfield, Opsales president.

A full range of merchandising materials include a comprehensive fit kit, which is compact, versatile and easy to use. There is also a countertop, polarized lens glare demonstrator.



Shade Control clips consist of wide range of shapes and colors.



A counter top display demonstrates polarization.

Each clip comes with a slim case. Visionaries are made in the U.S. and contain a "certificate of authenticity." They are sold exclusively to optical professionals. ■■

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BOLD FACE

Early in his career Adrian Grenier played a member of a movie star's entourage in the movie *Celebrity*. He currently stars on HBO



as a celebrity with an entourage of his own in the series *Entourage* and rumor has it he is working on a documentary about the

cult of celebrity and its relationship with the media.

Anyone detect a theme? Here he is looking every bit the star in his **Leiber** Men's JLM2001SG sunglasses from Legacie...

No one can belt out a song like Alicia Keys and it just so happens that *No One* is the title of the first single off her latest album *As I Am*, which has earned her two more Grammy awards to add to her growing collection.



And it seems that no one can rock out better in pair of **Ray-Ban** Aviators, style RB3025, from Luxottica like Ms. Keys either...

Elton John's Annual AIDS Foundation Oscar Party is the Academy Award's after-party to be at to catch glimpses of all the night's award winners and Hollywood glitterati. In order for Elton himself to see those stars he relies on the Filled ophthalmic frame from **Chrome Hearts**



homes for Hurricane Katrina survivors in New Orleans, adding a new baby to the Jolie-Pitt family or just looking good. This time all he's done to land himself in our pages is look good in his **Mykita** Rolf sunglasses in Goldline...

Lots of stars get a ton of attention after a stint in rehab and most of its not good but Eva Mendes has bucked that trend by coming away



from her stay at the Cirque Lodge treatment facility looking well-rested, refreshed and fabulous in her **Chloe** Nyssa sunglasses from Cachet, the luxury division of

L'Amy America... Avid fans of the ABC hit series *Lost* now know that Jin Kwon, the character played by actor Daniel Dae Kim, isn't on of the Oceanic Six that make it off the island but here he is alive and well in

and OSA International...

Everything Brad Pitt does is newsworthy; whether he is making a new movie, building



Katherine Heigl. She is a bone-fide Hollywood It Girl, she is on one of the hottest series on TV, appeared in two popular movies, won an Emmy Award and gotten married. Seems she has plenty to

smile about here in her **Gucci** GG1825S sunglasses from Sàfilo...

Rob Lowe, star of the ABC show *Brothers & Sisters*, is one of the few actors of



1980's Brat Pack fame that has had consistent work for the majority of his career, it could be raw talent or it could be because

he is seriously handsome and doesn't seem to age. Whatever it is, here the star is looking fine in his **Cole Haan** CH674 sunglasses from ClearVision.



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CONTACT LENSES

CIBA Vision Debuts Air Optix Brand

“The breakthrough Precision Balance 8/4 lens design of Air Optix for Astigmatism lenses delivers a high rate of first-fit success, which means reduced chair time for eyecare professionals and improved practice growth potential.”

—Rick Weisbarth, OD



DULUTH, Ga.—CIBA Vision reports that Air Optix will now be the global brand name for CIBA Vision’s silicone hydrogel innovations in all markets around the world including the U.S.

Having one global brand name, the company said in a statement, “will allow CIBA Vision to significantly simplify its business operations and deliver consistently high customer service levels. Additionally, it will allow improved speed to market with future product innovations as CIBA Vision continues to innovate and build its Air Optix family

of products.”

Launching in the U.S. this Spring is the Air Optix for Astigmatism, with a monthly replacement schedule.

The Air Optix for Astigmatism Precision Balance 8/4 lens design features a wide optic zone to provide excellent visual acuity, and ensures the lens fitting characteristics and axis orientation are consistent from patient to patient, the company said. Additionally, 99 percent of Air Optix for Astigmatism lenses have acceptable or optimal fit at dispensing and stabilize on the eye in just 30 sec-

onds, according to the company.

“The breakthrough Precision Balance 8/4 lens design of Air Optix for Astigmatism lenses delivers a high rate of first-fit success, which means reduced chair time for eyecare professionals and improved practice growth potential,” said Rick Weisbarth, OD, FAAO and VP, global head professional development and partnerships. “Most importantly, this lens offers eyecare professionals an opportunity to truly satisfy the unmet vision and comfort needs of their astigmatic patients, increasing patient satisfaction and truly improving lives.”

The thickest points of the Air Optix for Astigmatism lens are at the 8 and 4 o’clock positions. This minimizes interaction with the lower lid for excellent comfort and is designed to allow the lens to adopt a stable position for consistently clear vision, CIBA noted.

Along with the constant contoured edge, this design provides outstanding stable vision and comfort throughout the wearing schedule. Air Optix for Astigmatism offers a Dk/t of 108 @ -3.00D and transmits up to seven times more oxygen than the leading low Dk/t hydrogel toric lenses, CIBA reports, so that eyes can stay healthy-looking and comfortable, no matter how long lenses are worn each day. The lenses feature a low amount of prism in the wide optic zone to reduce thickness and maximize Dk/t. The lenses also feature CIBA Vision’s patented, permanent, biocompatible plasma surface treatment that helps resist deposits and maintain excellent wettability to contribute to healthy lens wear.



Air Optix is CIBA’s new silhy brand.

“CIBA Vision is partnering with eyecare professionals by focusing our innovation efforts to develop contact lenses that meet the needs of even the most challenging-to-fit patients,” said Francesco Balestrieri, president of CIBA Vision, North America. “Our silicone hydrogel lenses are now available in sphere, toric and even made-to-order spherical powers, so that more patients can enjoy the healthy vision benefits that silicone hydrogel technology provides.”

Air Optix for Astigmatism lenses are made of lotrafilcon B. Launch parameters

Hydrogel Expands Extreme H2O 54% Toric Line

SARASOTA, Fla.—Hydrogel Vision Corporation, makers of Extreme H2O soft contact lenses, said it has expanded the company’s 54% toric product line with a new cylinder option—Extreme H2O 54% Toric MC (mid cyl, 1.25D).

Extreme H2O 54% Toric MC is designed for the 30 percent of astigmatic patients from 1.25D to 1.75D. The lens is available in 10 degree increments to meet the more precise axis requirements of a mid cyl correction. Lenses are initially available in the following axis; 180 +/- 20 in 10 steps (160, 170, 180, 190, 200) and 90 +/- 10 in 10 steps (80, 90, 100). Additional axis in 10 degree increments around the clock will be available throughout 2008.

Extreme H2O 54% Toric was originally launched in a LC design (low cyl, 0.65D) geared to the 55 percent of astigmatic patients from 0.50D to 1.00D. This lens is available in 30-degree axis around the clock requiring fewer parameters, yet providing virtually the same vision as lenses within 10 axis. The ease of fit combined with the low product

cost enables doctors to give patients greatly improved vision at an affordable price, the company said.

Extreme H2O 54% Toric LC and MC lenses are made with Hydrogel Vision’s third generation GMA Hydrogel copolymer, hioxifilcon D, and contain 54 percent water, providing advanced water retention properties with durability and strength, the company noted.

Free diagnostic sets of the Extreme H2O 54% Toric LC and MC lenses are available directly through Hydrogel Vision and through any of their authorized Extreme H2O distributors.

Hydrogel Vision Corp. is a privately held corporation here that manufactures specialty disposable soft contact lenses under the Extreme H2O brand name. Extreme H2O lenses are marketed exclusively through independent ECPs via an industry-first technology licensing and distribution agreement, the company said. For more information about Hydrogel Vision and Extreme H2O lenses, call (877) 336-2482 or visit www.extreme-h2o.com. ■

Air Optix will now be the global brand name for CIBA Vision’s silicone hydrogel innovations in all markets around the world including the U.S.

are from plano to -6.00D in 0.25D steps, with cylinder powers of -0.75 and -1.25 and axes around-the-clock in 10° steps. These parameters will be expanded in the near future to include plus powers, high-minus powers and additional cylinder powers. The lenses have a diameter of 14.5 mm and a base curve of 8.7 mm, and feature a blue handling tint. They are approved for daily wear and up to six nights of extended wear, and are recommended for monthly replacement. ■

CL Maker SynergEyes Awarded Sixth U.S. Patent

CARLSBAD, Calif.—Contact lens maker SynergEyes recently was awarded its sixth U.S. patent, for improving the hydrophilicity—long-term comfort and wettability—of hybrid CLs.

Said SynergEyes’ co-founder and vice president of manufacturing, Joe Collins,

“SynergEyes is dedicated to providing our customers with revolutionary technology in hybrid contact lenses. This patent enhances our Intellectual Property portfolio and represents highly valued strategic assets that distinguish our products in the contact lens industry.” ■



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NEWS VIEWS

OLA OKs Sweeping Bylaws Changes

FAIRFAX, Va.—Members of the Optical Laboratories Association (OLA) have voted overwhelmingly to approve sweeping changes in the organization's bylaws that redefine its membership, leadership, operating procedures and dues structure.

As a result of the moves, all Rx manufacturing optical lab companies are now in one category of membership regard-

less of ownership or market level. All lab member companies are equally eligible to hold positions in the OLA leadership. All lab member companies are assessed dues on the same basis – the volume of Rx eyewear production.

"These changes give OLA a sound, contemporary basis to chart the future direction of the association," said OLA president Barney Dougher, who is also president of Hoya Vision Care North America.

Bylaws committee chairman Steve Sutherlin of Sutherlin Optical, who spearheaded the effort to re-engineer

the OLA organization, said many of the bylaws were originally written 32 years ago, and did not reflect the current optical industry.

"At that time, there was almost no such thing as a retail lab or an HMO lab. There was very little penetration of insurance plans. There was no Wal-Mart or Target Optical, and no big lens companies buying up labs. Everything was ordered through inde-

"These changes give OLA a sound, contemporary basis to chart the future direction of the association."

—Barney Dougher, OLA



pendent wholesale labs by private ODs.

"Today, OLA is not just the voice of the independent lab, or the vertically integrated lab, large retail lab, or HMO lab," said Sutherlin. "It's the voice of the manufacturing lab." ■

@ Additional info about OLA's new organizational structure is available by going to the Latest News section on VisionMonday.com.

USOphthalmic Targets U.S. With Huvitz Edgers

MIAMI, Fla.—USOphthalmic, an independent optical and ophthalmic equipment distributor based here, is making a push into the U.S. edger market. Although the seven-year-old company's business is primarily focused on Latin America, last year it established a new division, USOphthalmic Edging Solutions, to market the Korean-made Huvitz line of edging and ophthalmic equipment in the U.S.

"We entered the U.S. retail market

with Huvitz's Excelon line of edgers, tracers and blockers," said Ezequiel D. Lukin, general manager of USOphthalmic. "We're the exclusive U.S. distributor. In addition, we are also the exclusive distributor of Huvitz edging and ophthalmic equipment in Latin America and the official global distributor of Luxvision and Gilras ophthalmic products," added Lukin, who noted that USOphthalmic is also an OEM supplier to Hilco, Lombart and other companies.

To break into the competitive U.S. market, USOphthalmic is offering competitive prices and a direct, streamlined approach to sales and service.

"Part of our business plan is coming out with a new scheme to allow independent eye-care practitioners to compete with well-established retailers," Lukin explained. "We have some local distributors and salespeople, as well as a trained technician to provide support locally. We also have a DVD that will help independents install the equipment and another that shows them how to use and maintain it. We're offering a one-year, full warranty on parts. Our aim is to provide the highest value in the industry."

The Huvitz Excelon line consists of the CPE4000 edger, which bevels, polishes, grooves, and safety bevels all lens materials, and the CAB4000 automatic blocker. The blocker features a lens metering function and a three-dimen-



The Huvitz Excelon system consists of the CPE4000 edger, left, and the CAB4000 automatic blocker, right.

sional tracer that automatically determines the base curve of the frame. A digital scanner eliminates the need to trace demo lenses and patterns. Digital pattern layout software allows users to easily modify lens shape and circumference on an intuitive, user-friendly menu.

In addition, the blocker can recognize bifocal and progressive lenses placed at any position. All of the auto-blocker's functions can be accessed via an intuitive touch screen and user-friendly menu.

"The system is ideally suited for practices moving into lens finishing," Lukin said. ■

Briot Intros Alta XS System



CUMMING, Ga.—Briot USA is expanding its Alta finishing equipment line with the addition of the Alta XS system, which the Cumming-based company will feature at the upcoming International Vision Expo East. The Alta XS features a new tracing, centering and blocking unit with a large high-resolution touch screen that gives quick access to all system functions. A new shape library, customizable through

an alphanumeric keypad, organizes data to be easily accessed through "sort," "search," "favorites" and other criteria.

Alta XS delivers the essential functions needed to produce all standard and premium jobs, Briot reports. Other features that add value to mid-range centering/blocking system include drill-hole recognition, shape modification and high-quality finishing. ■

OptiSource Releases IFP



BELLPORT, N.Y.—OptiSource International is releasing the OptiSource IFP (Intermediary Film Pad). Designed for hydrophobic/oleophobic AR lenses, the clear film pads contain a proprietary adhesive that sticks to hydrophobic/oleophobic AR lenses. The top side of the pad substrate is designed to accept blocking pads and form a strong bond between the two surfaces, creating optimal adhesion to hydrophobic surfaces and blocking pads. ■

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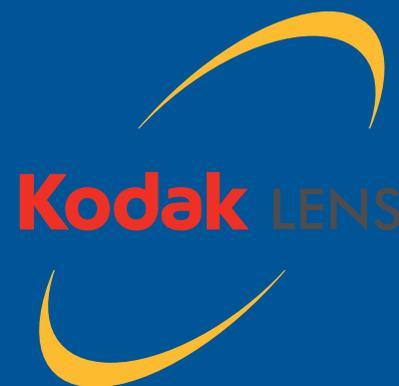


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LAUNCHES

Schneider Offers Free-form Polisher



DALLAS—Schneider Optical Machinery is featuring its new manual free-form and Rx polisher, CCP Swift, at International Vision Expo East. When used together with the company's HSC Smart generator, the compact CCP Swift offers a high-quality freeform surfacing solution for small and medium sized labs, according to Dr. Wenko Süptitz of Schneider.

"We designed the fully CNC controlled polisher, CCP swift, specifically for labs to master

freeform as well as Rx polishing with ease," said Süptitz. "The manually loaded machine includes the quality-defining features of the industry leading automated soft-lap polishers CCP102/103, like usage of Schneider's permanent pads, multi-step polishing cycles, and modern macro technology. The intelligent tool management monitors the usage of the pads and indicates to the operator when the replacement of tools is necessary. The transfer of Schneider's proven and successful polishing technology to the compact class guarantees

excellent and consistent results for even the tightest equipment budgets. The CCP Swift is a sound investment in the future for small labs or manually operated larger labs."

Other features of the CCP Swift include polishing of all free-form designs on the market, superb surface quality and high throughput, Süptitz said.

He also noted that the CCP Swift eliminates hard laps for Rx surfaces, and uses four "click-easy" disposable tools to polish the whole range of free-form lenses. ■

PSI Intros Versatile New Blocking Pad

ODESSA, Fla.—The new SecurEdge Plus from PSI (Practical Systems Inc.) is the latest generation of blocking pads designed specifically to bond to AR, hydrophobic and oleophobic lens coatings. Based on the design of PSI's SecurEdge technology, SecurEdge Plus

incorporates a dual, high-performance adhesive system.

On one side of the pad is an adhesive engineered to adhere to slick lens coatings without slipping, while the other side has a different adhesive designed to adhere securely to the block. The pad

features a soft foam surface that conforms to any curve while protecting the lens.

The pads have a double-tabbed design for easy removal. PSI offers SecurEdge Plus in nine configurations to fit most edger blocks. ■



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LAUNCHES

AIT to Intro New Finishing System



AIT's Maxima Combinax Evolution finishing system consists of the Maxima is designed to handle difficult jobs with ease.

BENSENVILLE, Ill.—AIT is releasing its latest finishing system, the Maxima Combinax Evolution, at Vision Expo East.

Designed to handle difficult jobs with ease, the Maxima Combinax Evolution edger operates on a high precision servomotor to offer shape and sizing flexibility. Additionally, the edger incorporates a grooving and pin bevel system that can be angled up to 15 degrees. "The edger offers specialty features such as a superhydrophobic special roughing function to insure axis integrity when edging specially coated and expensive lenses," noted

Matthew Vulich, vice president of marketing for AIT. "It automatically grinds and bevels all materials with dynamic speed control and four bevel programs. One other great feature is the whisper quiet operation at less than 72db."

The complimentary Combinax Evolution combines a tracer, centering device and blocker with a cycle time for tracing both eyes of 10 seconds. The Combinax utilizes a parallax free camera layout system with a Windows interface, and digital image processing technology for automated blocking. ■■

Dynamic Debuts Quick Release

HAUPPAUGE, N.Y.—At International Vision Expo, Dynamic Labs is introducing Ultra White, a quick release blocking pad designed to adhere extremely well to the lens but is simple to deblock. For more difficult AR coated lenses Dynamic offers the Secure Edge and Big Red blocking pads which work



on some of the most difficult coatings, according to Dynamic Labs. The company will also display its new ergonomically designed Vitali deblocking pliers that was designed to reduce damage to the coating on thin-centered lenses while helping prevent carpal tunnel syndrome. ■■

DAC Intros Premium Polish

GARLAND, Texas—DAC Vision is releasing HD-360 lens polish, featuring advanced lens polish chemistry designed to improve clarity and reduce haze on all lens materials, particularly polycarbonate. HD-360 produces outstanding surface quality that is ideally suited for coating, according to DAC. Longevity is an added benefit as HD-360 is engi-



needed to offer extended use when compared to other premium polishes.

In addition, HD-360 maintains consistent Baumé throughout the life of the polish, while demonstrating excellent suspension characteristics for consistent results. A low viscosity design improves flow while reducing pad carry out, making clean-up easier. ■■

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LAUNCHES

Quantum Debuts 'Big Dipper'

CENTRAL POINT, Ore.—Visitors to Quantum Innovations's booth at Vision Expo East can see a demonstration the company's Big Dipper, a small piece of equipment used to apply Lens Wrap protective coating to lenses immediately after AR coating. With a capacity of 12

lenses per run, a lab can coat over 100 lenses per hour.

Lens Wrap provides superior adhesion for blocks during the edging process, virtually eliminating slippage on lenses coated with super hydrophobic, Quantum reports. It also protects lenses from

scratches and chemicals during drilling and other lab processes.

Lens Wrap will increase throughput, saving both time and money, according to Quantum. The product is optically clear; no chemicals are needed for removal, and no special edger pads are required. ■■

Harbor Kicks Off Polarized Lens Promo

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich.—Harbor Optical, an independent optical laboratory based here, has kicked off a new marketing program designed to help eyecare professionals increase their polarized eyewear sales. The new promotion, called Beach Bums, is designed to help practices realize the importance of polarized lenses sales as a way to increase patient satisfaction, while at the same time, growing the practice's bottom line.

"We strive to not only provide exceptional service and products to practices, but also identifying ways to partner with the practices we work with to help them

grow," said Geff Heidbrink, president of Harbor Optical. "The Beach Bums promotion is a great way to encourage supplemental eyewear sales by providing eye care professionals with a reward for their efforts."

The Beach Bums program started January 1, 2008 and will run through May 31, 2008. During this time, ECPs are eligible to receive an entry ticket into the grand prize drawing for each pair of polarized lenses sold. If the polarized lenses are a second pair eyewear sale and are ordered at the same time as the primary pair, a bonus of two tickets will be awarded.

These tickets are sent back to the ECP's office with the finished lenses.

The Grand Prize includes four VIP tickets to the Traverse City Beach Bums baseball game, a two-night hotel stay and a \$100 gift card for meals. When the ECP receives the tickets, they fill them out with their contact information and return it to Harbor Optical to be entered. All ticket entries must be sent and received by Harbor Optical no later than June 13, 2008. The drawing for three Grand Prize winners will take place the morning of June 16, 2008. For more information call (888) 251-2040. ■■

Salem Vision Group Intros Claron Plastic Lens Polish

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.—Claron plastic lens polish, new from the Salem Vision Group, is a complex mixture of high-purity aluminum oxide particles in an aqueous suspension. The aluminum oxide employed is the product of precise particle engineering. This process creates a crystalline structure with the optimum particle size, shape and hardness, Salem reported.

Advanced fluid dynamics produces the supporting additives that control the dispersion and suspension of the aluminum oxide particles as well as enhance "cleanability" and suppress foam. A bonus for operators is the aqueous component, which provides a lotion-like effect on the skin.

Salem Group will exhibit Claron plastic lens polish at International Vision Expo. ■■

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When Horseplay at Work Turns to Hazing



Hedley Lawson, Jr.

Several months ago, the Delaware Supreme Court permitted a lawsuit to go forward alleging personal injury by one employee against fellow employees. The plaintiff was a construction worker who was injured in a "horseplay" incident, which occurred on the job.

A lower court had ruled that the incident was covered by workers' compensation; therefore no personal injury lawsuit could be actionable.

This particular injury occurred when a pipe fitter and welder was trapped in a bathroom on the job by three co-workers. The plaintiff alleged that he was cornered in the restroom and his co-workers wrapped him from ankles to shoulders in duct tape and left him in the restroom. The plaintiff's injuries required knee and back surgery as well as counseling. The plaintiff has collected more than \$300,000 in workers compensation benefits.

Consistent with most rulings related to workplace injury, the judge at the lower court level granted summary judgment based on the argument that workers compensation was the plaintiff's exclusive remedy. The judge chose to ignore the fact that there were many examples of horseplay and practical jokes at the employer's place of business where all the men worked.

The Delaware Supreme Court relied, for the first time, on what is often called the "Larson Test." This test is named after the author of the widely used book on the subject "Larson's Workers' Compensation Law."

This analysis requires a four-part test:

1. The scope and seriousness of the conduct deviates from normal employment activities.
2. Whether the conduct was co-mingled or separate from work duties.
3. Whether horseplay is a regular and

accepted practice at the workplace in question.

4. Whether or not the nature of the job typically included horseplay.

Many plaintiffs' attorneys have argued that it has been unfairly difficult for plaintiffs to collect third party damages from other employees due to the workers' compensation exclusive remedy doctrine. Until this case, plaintiffs have been required to argue what the conduct was "outside the scope of employment" in order to get around the workers compensation exclusion.

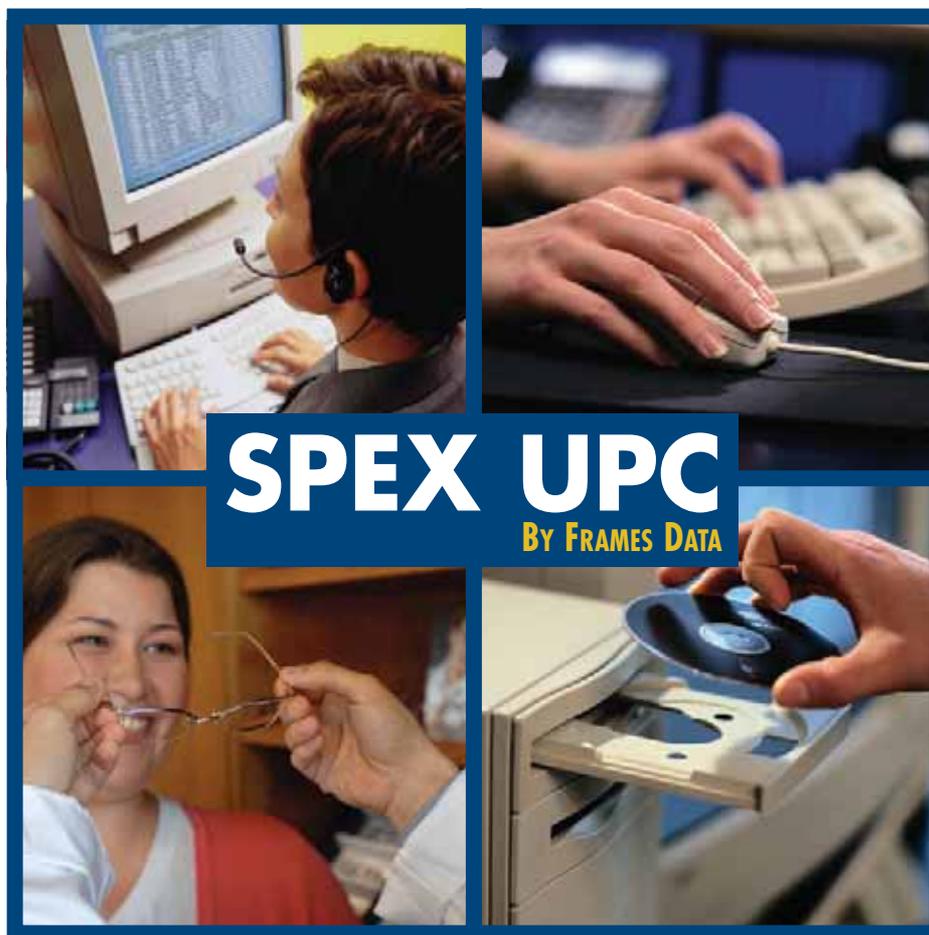
In the case outlined above, the plaintiff's attorney successfully argued that the conduct was far and above acceptable or reasonable notions of "horseplay." In fact, several reviewers have compared this case to the type of "hazing" cases that have carried tort (i.e. injury) liability for college fraternities.

So if you're a wholesale laboratory, retail eyecare office, or some other optical workplace, why should this case be important to you? You should be aware of this decision for two reasons. First, it shows that steps should be taken, in every workplace to avoid horseplay since it can grow out of control as it did in this case. Secondly, plaintiffs' attorneys have consistently attacked the workers' compensation exclusive remedy protection from the employer's perspective. Workers' compensation protects employers from third party liability for incidents that occur in the course and scope of employment and limits damages to those available under workers' compensation. This case may mark the beginning of a different line of decision that could open the door for third party liability for workplace injuries.

Hedley Lawson, Jr. is the managing partner of Aligned Growth Partners, LLC, a strategic, operational and organizational consulting and executive search firm (www.alignedgrowth.com).

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EDITORIAL

Keeping an Eye on the Economy



Cathy Ciccolella
Senior Editor

How bad off is the U.S. economy, anyway? That's likely to be a hot topic of conversation among attendees and exhibitors alike at International Vision Expo East.

With daily news reports full of bank bailouts, escalating mortgage woes and consumer uncertainty, the nation's overall business picture doesn't look great. And yet, the numbers reported by public eyewear/eyecare companies, backed up by anecdotal evidence from privately held optical retailers, eyecare professionals and suppliers, indicate that while we're certainly not looking for a boom in business this year, so far this industry seems to be holding its own.

A look at this issue's exclusive feature on the latest VisionWatch vision care sales and market share data gives an update on last year's performance. (The VisionWatch survey, conducted by VM parent Jobson Medical Information and the

Vision Council of America, surveys 100,000 U.S. consumers annually on their buying patterns for and attitudes about eyewear and eyecare.)

VisionWatch survey numbers for the full year 2007 indicate that industry dollar sales were virtually flat last year, as were revenues in the key ophthalmic frame and spectacle lens product categories.

But in a sharply down economy—already being characterized by some financial pundits as a recession—keeping pace with a previous (and strong) year is not too bad.

In a sharply down economy, keeping pace with a previous (and strong) year is not too bad.

With their own P&L statements for fiscal 2007 fresh in their minds, retailers and ECPs who head to Vision Expo East can be expected to be as cautious in their buying as at any show in recent memory. That certainly doesn't mean they won't *be* buying—it just means

impulse buys, as opposed to well-thought-out purchasing decisions, may be few and far between this time.

In addition, the current economic conditions may generate even more interest than usual in education courses on practice management, business systems and controls, and the financial aspects of running a store or optometric office.

Every time we hit an economic downturn, we hear about how the optical business is generally recession-proof—how its products are low enough in price that consumers can “treat” themselves to new eyewear as an affordable luxury, how the importance of eyecare from a health/vision standpoint doesn't change despite economic conditions, and how a savvy businessperson can compete successfully in the worst of recessionary times.

And you know what? That's all true, to some extent. This can still be a decent year for our industry, and for the broad spectrum of its players who take a sensible, educated approach to their businesses. VM's editors will be talking to a lot of those smart players at Expo. ■■

What's Online @ VisionMonday.com

About visionmonday.com

VisionMonday.com has an innovative, new look. Content from our most recent issues is organized by topic and category, making it easy to find the information you need fast. And **VMail Extra** Subscribers have access to **VM's** comprehensive archives via a new search engine powered by Google. We have also added a downloadable PDF version of the most recent issue of **VM**.

High Visibility



Check out **VM's** exclusive coverage of the Fall 2008 runway shows at the Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week held in New York. Straight from the runway, see what's hot in sunwear from models sporting looks from Legacie, L'Amey, Base Curve, and Sama.

WebTV



Tune into **Vision Monday's WebTV**, the industry's first video network where you'll find all of your current favorites. Watch informative videos covering every facet of the eyecare industry. Current channels highlight: Scene & Heard optical editorial coverage. Optical Events, Educational Video Press Releases, Progressive Lenses, Lens Coatings & Treatments, Finishing Equipment, Frames, and Practice Management Technology.

New & Noteworthy

Industry Airs Views on FDA Lens Impact Guidelines

Get the latest update on this important story as **VM** delivers insightful comments from optical industry organizations and independent ECPs about the Food and Drug Administration's controversial proposed guidelines for eyeglass lens impact testing. Available only online, download PDFs of letters and viewpoints to the FDA from various industry voices.

Poll

Check out **VM's** latest **Live Poll** where we asks readers, “What is your primary priority for attending Vision Expo East?” Vote and make your voice heard. The poll is located at the bottom of the **Vision Monday** homepage at www.visionmonday.com.

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CooperVision CL Unit Posts 12 Percent Revenue Gain in Q1

PLEASANTON, Calif.—The Cooper Companies' (NYSE: COO) CooperVision contact lens division saw its revenues climb by 12 percent, to \$205.5 million, in the company's first quarter ended Jan. 31.

Broken down by product, CooperVision's specialty lens revenue (toric, multifocal and cosmetic) was \$86.7 million in Q1, up 12 percent. Sales of toric lenses reached \$70.5 million, up 11 percent; multifocal

lens sales were \$12.7 million in the period, up 24 percent.

Revenues from CooperVision's Proclear products were \$51.6 million, up 34 percent from last year's first quarter. Sales of single-use CLs rose 41 percent, to \$36.2 million, while sales of the company's Biofinity contact lens fell to \$9.1 million, vs. \$9.8 million in the prior year's Q1.

According to Robert Weiss, the parent company's chief

executive officer, "At [CooperVision], revenues were strong in all geographic markets and we outpaced market growth. We are clearly seeing a revival of CVI's historic revenue growth and share-gain patterns."

The Cooper Companies is now projecting full-year 2008 sales of from \$895 million to \$930 million, up from previous projections of sales in the \$875 million to \$920 million range. ■

After Q4 Income Drops, LCA-Vision Cuts 16 Percent of Work Force

CINCINNATI—After a fourth quarter in which its net income dropped by more than 20 percent, to \$4.1 million from \$5.6 million in the same period last year, refractive surgery firm LCA-Vision (Nasdaq: LCAV) cut its nationwide work force by 16 percent, according to the company.

Revenues increased by 24 percent, to \$69.7 million, in Q4, however, although procedure volume slumped 5 percent to 39,888.

In the full year 2007, LCA-Vision's revenues reached \$292.6 million, up 22 percent. Procedure volume increased 4 percent, to 192,204. The com-

pany's net income for the year was \$32.5 million, vs. \$28.4 million in fiscal 2006.

LCA-Vision opened 13 new LasikPlus vision centers in 2007, and recently announced the opening of its 73rd center, in Savannah, Ga.

Looking ahead to the rest of 2008, LCA-Vision's chief executive officer, Steve Straus, said the company plans to open five to 10 vision centers during the year, and also plans to relocate four to seven existing locations.

Added Straus, "We expect the U.S. economy, including its impact on consumer spending habits and our industry, to continue to be challenging throughout

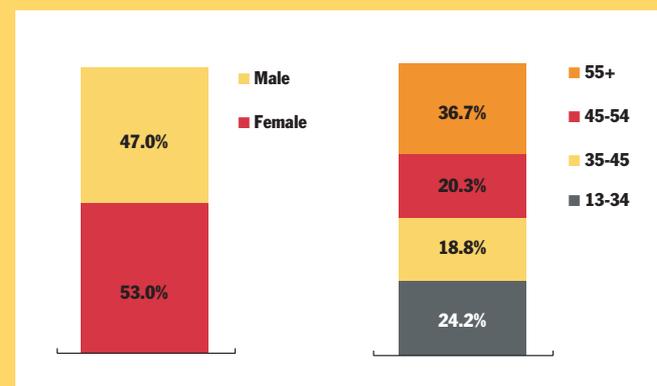
2008, and we estimate that industry procedure volumes could decline by more than 10 percent. However, we remain committed to selectively invest in our national expansion by opening vision centers in new markets, and relocating and renovating existing vision centers," he said.

Straus said the company has also updated its LasikPlus Web site, and has shifted hours of operations at many of its vision centers to be more consumer-friendly.

In addition to the recent work force reduction, he noted, LCA-Vision is "diligently managing our general and administrative costs." ■

DATA POINT

Eyeglass Wearers by Gender and Age



Among eyeglass wearers in the 12 months ending Dec. '07, the majority were females (53.0%). Broken out by age groups of eyeglass wearers, the largest group was the 55+ with 36.7%. The second to largest age group among eyeglass wearers is the 18-34 olds with 24.2% of them wearing eyeglasses. In the 12 months ending Dec. '07, slightly more eyeglass wearers are in the 45-54 group than the 35-44 age group, with 20.3% and 18.8%, respectively.

Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA
Total Annual VisionWatch Sample Size: 100,000 consumer respondents per year (ages 18+)
Data is for the 12ME (months ending) December 2007.

BY THE NUMBERS The latest figures

41%

Independent optical retailers sold 41 percent of all frame units. Conventional chains and leased optical departments in department stores combined sold 36 percent.

12%

Among all those ages 18-64 that use some sort of vision correction, 12 percent have had an evaluation to determine if they were a good candidate for vision correction or refractive surgery.

47%

The percent of sunglass wearers who are male.

70%

Of all those who had an eye exam in the last 6 months, 70 percent had their exam at an independent.

Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA
Total Annual VisionWatch Sample Size: 100,000 consumer respondents per year (ages 18+)
Data is for the 12ME (months ending) December 2007. Refractive Surgery and Eye Exam data is for the 6ME December 2007.

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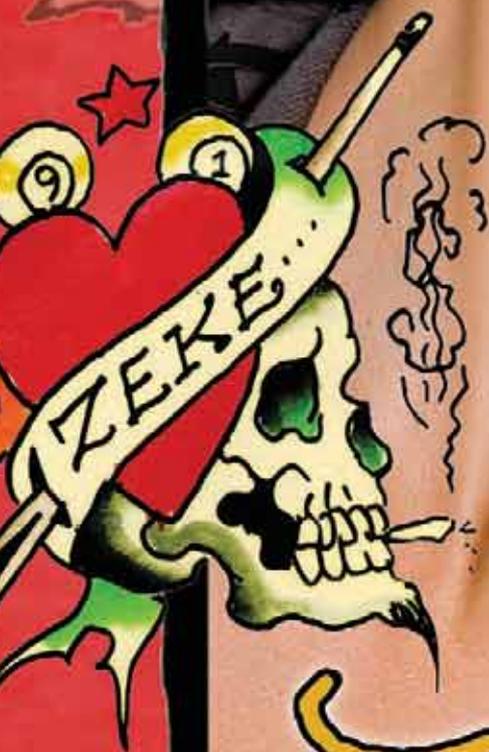
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