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VOL. 21 NO. 14 \$15

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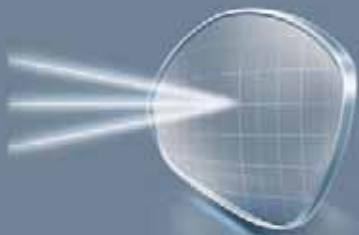
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Transitions names
Craig president; Elias
to become CEO

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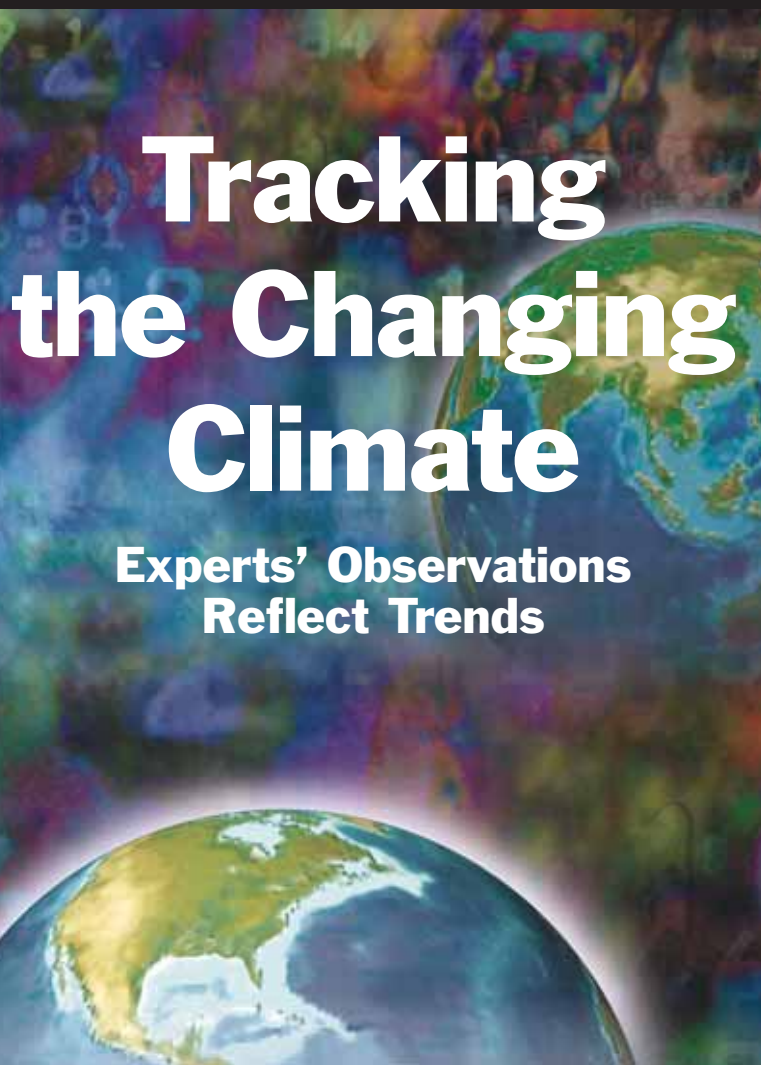


VISION **Monday**

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The Newsmagazine for the Eye Care Industry

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Tracking the Changing Climate

Experts' Observations
Reflect Trends

Over the past 12 months, VM marked its 20th anniversary milestone with a series of "Celebrating Leadership" reports featuring insights, predictions and opinions from dozens of industry observers. For this issue, we've highlighted a handful of their comments as a way of underlining key issues facing eyecare professionals, retailers, wholesalers and suppliers as they plan for the year ahead. See Page 34.

NEWSMAKERS

The VisionWeb Mission



After five years, the VisionWeb portal is wide open, allowing ECPs and optical retailers to order products or process insurance claims via the VisionWeb network.

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OLA WRAP-UP

OLA 2007 Meeting

A look back at last month's Optical Laboratories Association 2007 Meeting highlighting Awards of Excellence.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

For '08: Consider Strategy, Determine Tactics



Marge Axelrad
Editorial Director

A final note on 2007: optical and eyewear sales held strong, the consumer appeared to wake up to the increasingly appealing array of eyewear styles and brands, new technologies propelled categories like contact lenses and the number of eye exams increased.

But underneath the incredibly important goals of helping people see better, look good, and lead more productive lives through professional eyecare and astute retailing, business challenges continue to require all players in the industry to assess their positions and re-examine their tactics.

We've all seen news headlines in the last few months that spark some jitters. The subprime credit situation, a skittishness about interest rates and economic concerns about consumer spending levels, the impact of the pending Presidential election. This has been far removed from the pace of optical sales.

But those issues, along with the consumers' changing attitudes and the cost of money for expansion and reinvestment, make it more imperative than ever for optical retailers to run

their businesses tighter and smarter.

First, remember that those independents and regional chains who have re-determined their market positions and invested in systems and technologies to operate their businesses more efficiently are faring best right now. If you've done this, good for you and keep at it. If you haven't reconsidered what you're doing in terms of systems overhauls and buying smarter, there's no other thing to say than: get to it. It is as important as the eyecare element of your practice.

We talk about 'brands' and some people think the term only applies to the newest designer label. But the brand of 'you' and your practice is a quantifiable asset today, where people and patients are busy and are in command of the choices they make. It's a necessary survival skill to make sure your brand is really communicating to your customers and patients.

The ability to really make that happen is tied to the internal tactics you use to keep things running smoothly and more profitably. Those will be important watchwords in 2008.

From all of us at **Vision Monday**, our sincere best wishes for a Happy Holiday and prosperous New Year. ■■

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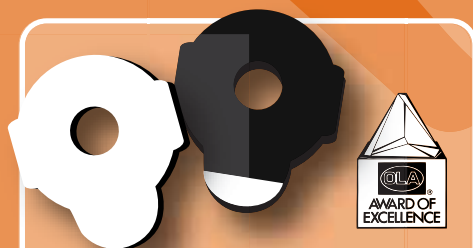


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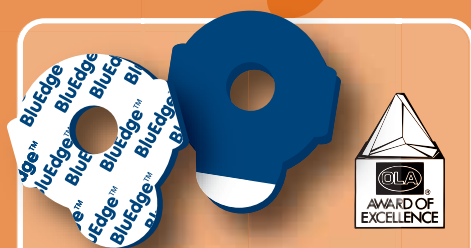


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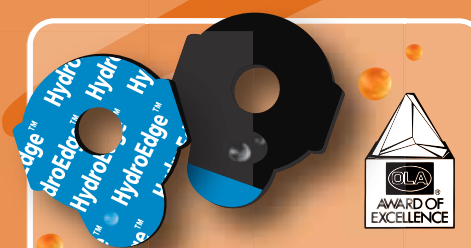
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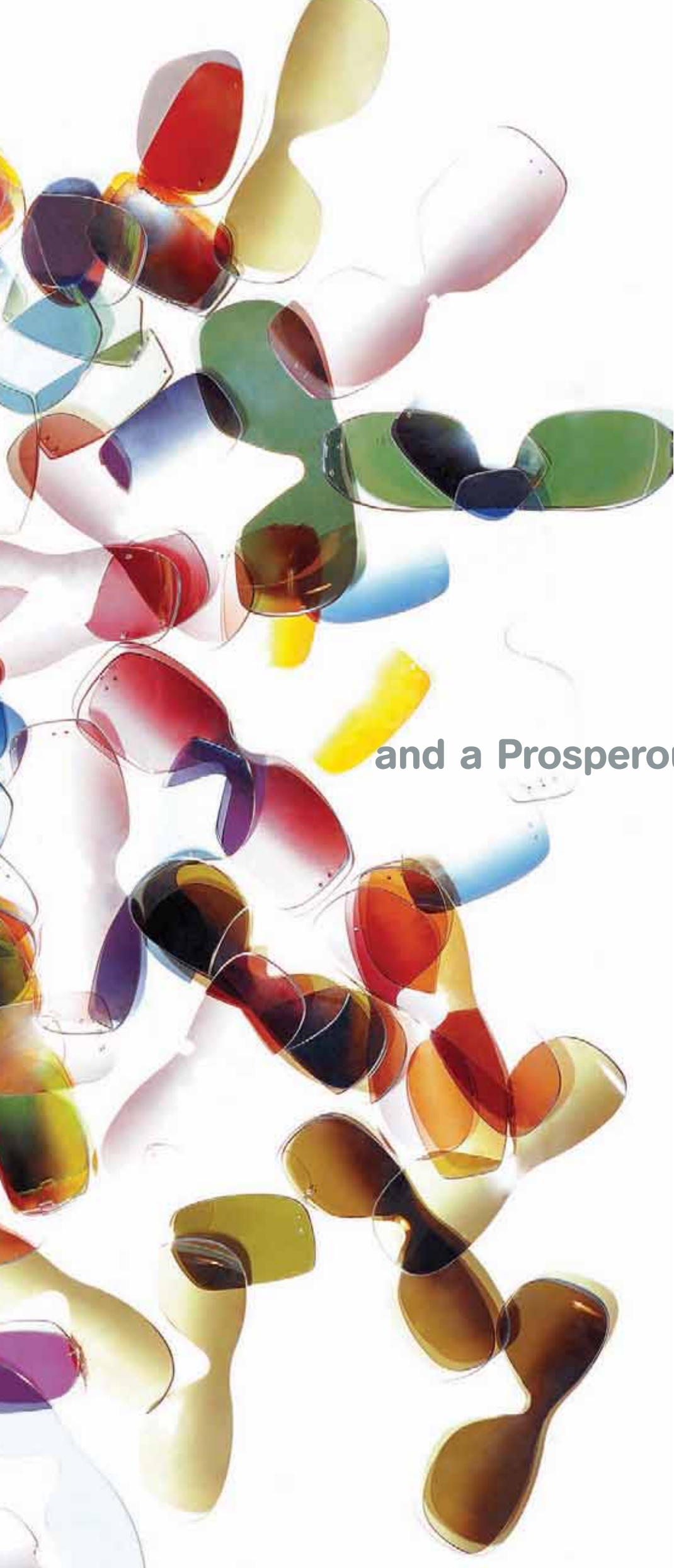
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NEWSMAKERS

At 5 Years, VisionWeb Portal Is Wide Open

By **Cathy Ciccolella**

Senior Editor

AUSTIN, Texas—Five years ago, the concept of communicating with optical laboratories via the Internet, of ordering frame and contact lens product from multiple suppliers online through a single site, or of keeping accurate track of managed vision claims and reimbursements



VisionWeb's home page.

electronically was foreign to many eyecare practitioners and optical retailers, especially smaller independents.

Today, that convenience is commonplace for VisionWeb's members, using the neutral industry portal at www.visionweb.com.

Since 2002, more than 56,000 eyecare practices worldwide have registered to order products or process insurance transactions over the VisionWeb network, according to the company. More than 11,000 rely on VisionWeb's services each day to send orders over one of 85 industry Web sites connected to VisionWeb's supplier network. And with more than 365 suppliers currently connected to the network, VisionWeb maintains over 145,000 online practice-to-supplier relationships, generating millions of orders each year, its executives said.

Exemplifying VisionWeb's mission—"Connect the Commerce of the Eyecare Industry"—is the fact that the company's software transacts more than 37,000 product orders daily...a volume currently growing at the fastest pace ever in VisionWeb's five-year operating history.

As Jeff Saddington, VisionWeb's president and chief executive officer, put it, "The whole concept behind VisionWeb is that we are an open, neutral portal—everyone is treated the same, and everyone can play. Included in our mission is that every independent doctor needs the ability to have a choice in maximizing his or her practice."

Added Saddington, "VisionWeb is not just a Web site. We're not a 'dot-com'—

we're a technical service provider."

VisionWeb's history actually goes back to 2000, when founders Essilor of America and Johnson & Johnson Vision Care (J&J) developed the concept of a neutral Internet portal for the optical industry. Its goal: to harness the power of the Web to enhance ECPs' practices. Essilor and J&J were joined shortly thereafter by Allergan (now Advanced Medical Optics) as a third equity partner.

The VisionWeb initiative got a strong boost in August 2001 by merging with Sightstreet, founded in January 2000 by VM parent Jobson Publishing, which became an equity partner in VisionWeb as part of the merger agreement.

After months of Beta testing in about 100 eyecare practices, VisionWeb was officially launched in March 2002 at International Vision Expo East; at the same time, Marchon Eyewear was announced as a fifth equity partner. The site was launched with more than 100 optical suppliers offering products online through VisionWeb.

At the launch announcement in New York, Al Berg, Marchon's chief executive officer, predicted, "The key to VisionWeb's success will be that it's an open system—everybody in the industry is invit-

ed. Its purpose is to make the optical industry stronger." Added Berg, "The vision we have is very clear: within 12 to 18 months VisionWeb will dramatically change the way business is done in the optical industry."

Those words proved to be prophetic as VisionWeb surged, spurred on by two strong executives who took over following the launch. Jacques Stoerr, who had retired as chairman of Essilor of America early in 2002 after helping to create the VisionWeb concept in 2000, came out of retirement in mid-2002 to serve a one-year term as VisionWeb's chief executive officer (Jobson Information Services CEO Marc Ferrara, who preceded Stoerr as VisionWeb CEO on an interim basis after the Sightstreet merger, remains as VisionWeb's chairman). A year later, Saddington, who had spent 30 years with Johnson & Johnson, succeeded Stoerr as CEO, having joined VisionWeb in August 2002 as chief operating officer.

Under their direction, VisionWeb began rapidly expanding its relationships with the optical lab community and with

suppliers of practice management systems. Another important step in broadening VisionWeb's user base was an alliance with the America Optometric Association (AOA), through which the AOA became a VisionWeb equity partner and AOA members got free membership in VisionWeb, which also initiated a program providing royalties to state optometric societies allied with AOA based on members'



VisionWeb's management team at International Vision Expo West (l to r); Mike O'Malley, chief operating officer; Stan Yamane, OD, vice president of professional relations; and Jeff Saddington, president and chief executive officer.

purchases through the site. This year, VisionWeb presented a \$35,000 check to the AOA to distribute among the 31 participating state affiliates.

Continued on page 23

ODs Say Online Services Offer Convenience, Accuracy

NEW YORK—For eyecare professionals who have shifted much of their product ordering, lab communications and managed-vision claims verification and processing from paper files to the Internet, these online services provide convenience as well as improved accuracy, ECPs told VM.

From independent practitioners in single offices to multi-doctor national and regional groups, these computer-age advancements have become an accepted—and for many a preferred—way of doing business.

Joe Ellis, OD, for example, practices in Benton, Ky., as part of the five-office Eyecare Associates of Kentucky group. Ellis has been using VisionWeb's services since the Internet portal's official launch in 2002; he was introduced to VisionWeb through his membership in the American Optometric Association.

"In the beginning, I just used VisionWeb to communicate with my labs," Ellis said. "Now we order contact lenses online as well, and for the last 18 months have also used it for insurance reimbursements. VisionWeb is a good intermediary with the insurance companies." VisionWeb was his introduction to

online ordering, Ellis noted; before the portal launched, his practice communicated with its labs via fax and telephone.

In addition to the speed and efficiency of its connection with VisionWeb, Eyecare Associates of Kentucky also noticed a boost in accuracy in its communications, Ellis added: "It cut down on the transport errors you get using a fax."

Birmingham, Ala., optometrist Tommy Crooks III, OD, of 20-location EyeCare Associates, has also been a VisionWeb user since the portal was launched. "The number one thing we use it for is its spectacle-lens ordering capability," Crooks said. "Number two is managed-vision claim processing."

He said the practice's lens ordering volume via VisionWeb has gradually increased to the point where about 90 percent of lens orders are done online.

"It took about six months before it became routine to order through Vision Web, but now, as the site has added suppliers and our comfort level has increased, it's changed our staff's behavior," Crooks told VM. "We no longer inventory any lenses—we order them all elec-

tronically and use our tracing capability."

Chris Cooper, OD, is one of six optometrists (along with two ophthalmologists) practicing in three-office West Tennessee Eye in the Memphis area. His practice is a relative latecomer to VisionWeb, signing on for its services within the past 12 months. But he has become a big fan, due primarily to the boost in efficiency it provides his practice. "Our staff absolutely loves it because of the increased efficiency," Cooper declared.

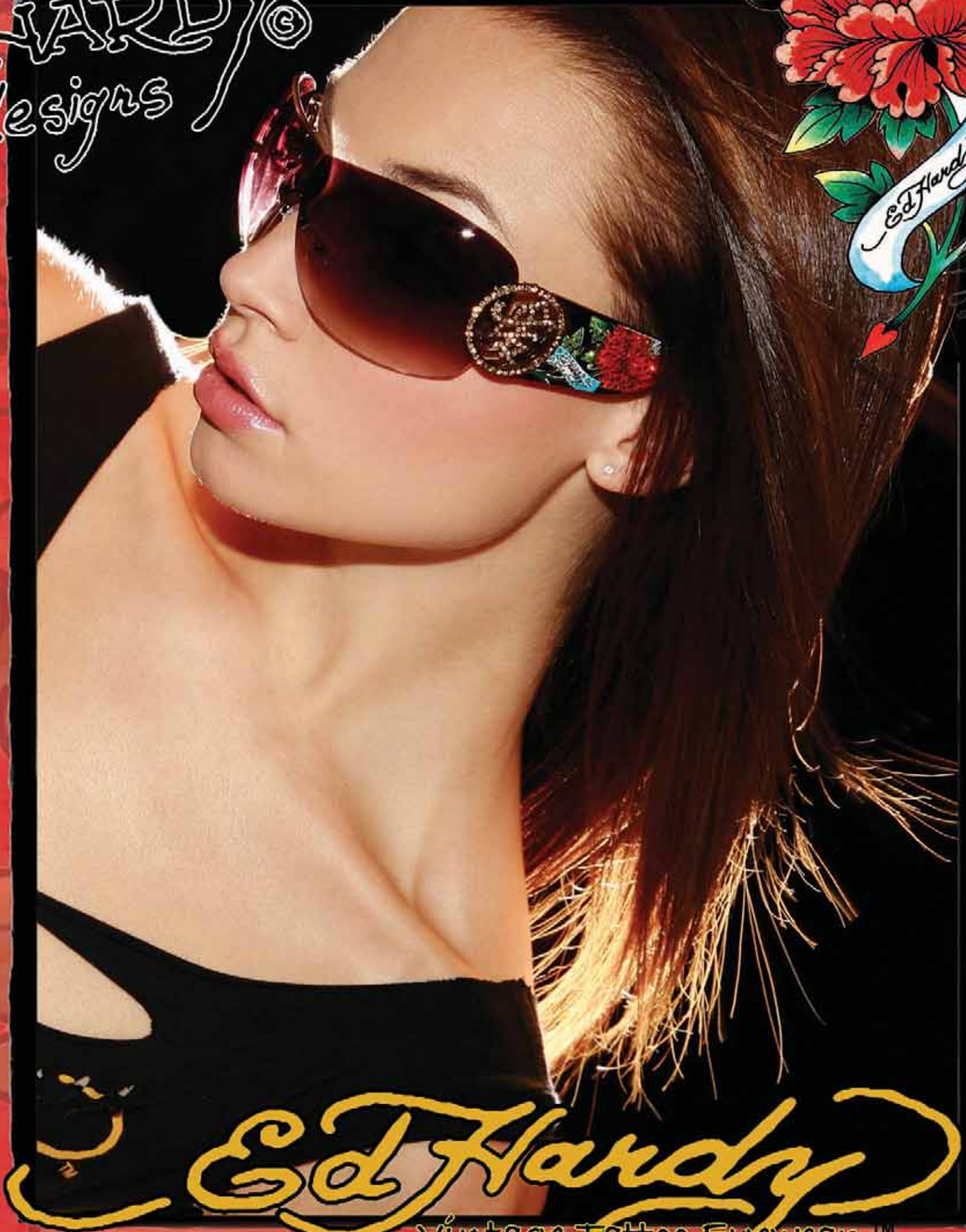
"And we've seen actual savings: our claim costs have dropped 25 percent since we joined VisionWeb compared to what we were paying our previous clearinghouse. We also like that VisionWeb provides confirmation of clean and valid claims, and that the system is repopulated each time, with information stored so we can search denied claims by patient name, for example, which we couldn't do before."

Ellis, Crooks and Cooper all expressed interest in VisionWeb's new training programs as another element that could help

Continued on page 23

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NEWS VIEWS

Transitions Names Craig President; Elias to Assume CEO Role



Brett Craig

PINELLAS PARK, Fla.—Transitions Optical, Inc. announced that Brett Craig will assume the responsibility of president, effective January 1, 2008. In this role, Craig, who is currently acting as chief operating officer, will drive Transitions' business strategies, including strengthening partnerships with Transitions' customers, to meet ongoing growth objectives.

"Obviously the role of president is one of great responsibility and great opportunity," said Rick Elias, current president, Transitions, who will assume the role of CEO. "Throughout the past months as acting COO, Brett has built solid relationships with employees and partners alike, making his move to this role a natural one. As CEO, I will focus my efforts on aligning with key customers globally toward

mutual, strategic growth."

Craig was named COO in June 2006. He joined Transitions in July 1999 as managing director, Asia Pacific, and then moved to managing director, EMEA (Europe, Middle East, Africa), where he played a key role in positioning the EMEA businesses for continued growth. He holds a bachelor of science in economics from the University of Wisconsin and a master of business administration from the Cox School of Business – Southern Methodist University.

"I look forward to the challenges that will come with my new role as president of Transitions, as well as the opportunities and successes that lie ahead for our company and our partners," said Craig. "I intend to support the products and programs that we have in place, while exploring new areas of innovation that will expand the application of our technology and the advancement of healthy sight." ■

Muller Named Group VP for International Vision Expo Events



Courtney Muller

NORWALK, Conn.—Reed Exhibitions announced several management changes to the leadership team of its flagship Vision events—International Vision Expo East and International Vision Expo West.

Courtney Muller returns to the Vision Expos as the new group vice president of the Vision portfolio of events. A veteran trade show and event industry manager, Muller currently leads Reed's

including sales, marketing, conference and operations.

Eileen Baird, who has led the International Vision Expo team since late in 2001, will become vice president for North American Education, a new role in which she will be responsible for continued development and growth of Reed's traditional trade show and conference businesses in the US and Canada. In addition to leading the Vision Expos and Midwest Vision Conference, she has also led InterBev and the Spa and Medical Spa Expo and Conferences.

Dennis J. MacDonald, senior vice president of Reed Exhibitions, North America, will add the Vision Expos to his portfolio of market-leading events in sectors including home/hearth, life/safety and lifestyle/leisure. This represents a return for MacDonald, who was responsible for the Vision Expos early in his Reed career, which began in 1989. Glenn Celentano, former vision event director, will return to Reed's Restaurant and Foodservice events as director of strategic accounts.

"We are excited about our new Vision Expo management team and look forward to the continued growth and success of these leading international shows," said Nancy Walsh, Reed's executive vice president. ■

Global Gaming Expo in Las Vegas and G2E Asia in China, in addition to Book-Expo America, the North American book publishing convention.

Joining Courtney Muller in leading Vision Expo is Tom Loughran, who will be event director of the Vision Expos. Loughran joined Reed in 1999 as a sales executive on the Vision Expos. After a stint as sales manager on National Manufacturing Week, Loughran returned to Vision Expo in 2004. In his new role, he will be responsible for managing all aspects of the Vision Expo shows,

Essilor Acquires 3 U.S. Labs and Majority of 2 U.K. Labs

CHARENTON-LE-PONT, France—Essilor International [ISIN: FR 0000121667] has acquired Premier Optics, Inc., Gold Optical Enterprises, Inc. and GK Optical in the U.S. The company has also strengthened its prescription laboratory network in Europe with the acquisition of majority stakes in Sinclair Optical Services and United Optical, two independent laboratories in the United Kingdom.

In the U.S., Essilor of America has acquired the assets of Premier Optics, Inc. and Gold Optical Enterprises, Inc., two prescription laboratories located, respectively, in Belmont and Fayetteville, North Carolina. Essilor has also acquired GK Optical, a group of two pre-

scription laboratories in Greenwood and Fort Wayne, Indiana. The three companies' combined full-year revenue totals \$8.5 million, Essilor said.

Based in Gloucester, England, Sinclair Optical serves the entire English market with a broad array of products that includes stock lenses, prescription lenses and surface treatments. Its full-year sales amount to €8 million. United Optical is located in Belfast, North Ireland. It also operates a subsidiary in Athlone, Ireland that specializes in the edging and mounting of prescription safety lenses. United Optical generates full-year revenue of around €5.8 million, the company said. ■

Marcolin Board Appoints New Managing Director and General Manager

LONGARONE, Italy—The board of directors of Marcolin S.p.A., headed by company president Giovanni Marcolin, has appointed Massimo Saracchi as the company's new managing director and general manager, effective Dec. 10.

"I'm sure that the arrival of a top manager such as Saracchi will allow the company to further develop its business worldwide as a high quality eyewear manufacturer in the luxury segment," said Marcolin.

Diego and Andrea Della Valle, the Marcolin family and Luigi Abete, the main shareholders of the company, expressed their full satisfaction for this nomination, "which further strengthens the Marcolin team, guarantees skilled leadership and ensures great growth potential," according

to a statement from the company.

From 2002 to 2007, Saracchi was the managing director of Unopiù, "consolidating the European leadership of the company in the outdoor furniture sector," according to Marcolin. Prior to that, Saracchi was vice president of marketing for Procter & Gamble.

Saracchi will replace Antonio Bortuzzo, the previous managing director and general manager of Marcolin S.p.A., who resigned during the board meeting from all of his positions within the Marcolin Group. His resignation as managing director was effective immediately, while his resignation from the position of general manager and from all other current positions in the company will be effective on Jan. 31. ■

Antonio Bortuzzo Named CEO of Italy's Allison

PADOVA, Italy—Antonio Bortuzzo is the new chief executive officer of frame manufacturer Allison S.p.A., based here.

Previously, Bortuzzo spent five years as managing director and general manager of Marcolin; he resigned as managing director during a Marcolin board meeting this week.

Bortuzzo also has experience as a senior partner with Ernst & Young Financial & Business Advisors.

"Antonio Bortuzzo combines an in-depth knowledge of the eyewear industry

with a significant financial experience, both nationally and internationally, and a strong expertise in the retail and consumer products industry, particularly with regard to sales and marketing," an Allison announcement said.

"The appointment of Bortuzzo is driven by the company's desire to further grow and strengthen its position both in the local and in international markets, continuing its success story," said Giovanni Cagnoli of Paladin Capital Partners, which acquired Allison just over three years ago. ■

Planning for 2008 with Transitions Online Marketing Tool (TOM)



The year is coming to an end, and, for most, the holiday season has approached quicker than expected. With the last minute holiday rush, it is often difficult for eyecare professionals (ECPs) to plan their practice's marketing goals for the new year. Transitions can ease that burden with the Transitions Online Marketing (TOM) tool, a complimentary and versatile marketing resource.

TRANSITIONS ONLINE MARKETING TOOL – CUSTOMIZED MARKETING

As the leading manufacturer of photochromic lenses, Transitions is dedicated to helping ECPs incorporate healthy sight education into their practices' marketing goals. The TOM tool is an invaluable resource that can help ECPs to promote their practices, allowing them to execute their marketing strategy at no cost and in just a matter of minutes. As a one-stop online source, ECPs can use the TOM tool to create custom point-of-sale (POS) tools, print advertising and promotional materials and download useful practice management tools. Each practice has its own style, and may have a different approach to vision care that suits the needs of its specific patient base. The TOM tool can help ECPs develop marketing materials that are tailored specifically for their practice, allowing them to stand out from the competition. Patients also tend to respond more positively to ads and point-of-sale materials that they can easily identify with. The TOM tool can help ECPs better target specific groups within their practices or region - and meet their specific needs.

THE MATERIALS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE ON THE TOM TOOL INCLUDE:

- Inserts for counter cards and dispensing mats
- Patient reminder cards
- Community/local ad templates
- Val Pak and Yellow Pages ads
- Patient newsletters
- Medical history questionnaire
- Custom Eyeglass Guide

ASSESSING 2008 GOALS

As the year winds down, now is the perfect time for ECPs to start developing their goals for the upcoming year. It may be helpful to establish these goals according to season. For example, ECPs can take a look at their patient flow during each month and see how their sales compare each season. As the summer approaches, some practices may see their sunwear sales increase. Others tend to see more patients in late summer and early fall, as kids return back to school. ECPs can also take a look at the current year - and see what areas they may have missed, but would like to cover for the following year. Once these factors are assessed, ECPs can get a better sense of what areas need more work and what areas can use additional reinforcement.

DEVELOP A PLAN

Once the goals are set, a plan of action needs to be developed to achieve them. If the goal is to increase sales in a specific category (i.e. sunwear or AR coatings), ECPs can consider driving sales by educating their patients on the benefits of each specific item. If ECPs want to better cater to the kids market, they can reiterate to parents the importance of an annual vision screening for their kids and remind them right before the back-to-school season. Practices may also want to think about ways to advertise their services and consider any promotions that they can run throughout the year to generate awareness and excitement among their patients.

EXECUTE WITH THE TOM TOOL

The TOM tool plays a very significant role in helping ECPs execute their practice's goals. The tool can be used to send out educational materials to patients or remind them of upcoming appointments. The tool's highly versatile features make it convenient for ECPs to cater to their specific needs. All of the materials on the TOM tool are customizable, allowing them to change the messaging on each piece to match each practice's needs. Customizable options include information such as unique headlines, seasonal messages, a library of images reflecting different ages, gender and ethnicities, special offers and promotions and practice information. ECPs can also choose from a variety of templates with information on package pricing, back-to-school, every day comfort and convenience and glare and UV protection.

SEASONAL MESSAGING

One of the most important advantages of the TOM tool is the ability for ECPs to customize their marketing message as the seasons change. In the summer months, ECPs can use the TOM tool to remind patients about the importance of UV protection while enjoying outdoor activities. Right before the fall, the TOM tool may be used to cater to kids and their back-to-school needs. For example, ECPs can take advantage of the back-to-school postcard, which ECPs can personalize and send to parents to encourage them to bring their children in for eye exams. ECPs can give these postcards their own personal touch by choosing from an array of colorful images, designs and two lines of custom messaging. ECPs can also send out *SightLine*, a patient newsletter available on the TOM tool which ECPs may use to communicate their seasonal messages. A library of articles is at their disposal to tailor the content of the newsletter to their liking, along with an area to upload their practice information. *SightLine* can be sent out monthly, quarterly or timed to the ECP's preferences - and is an excellent way to not only convey each practice's messaging, but can be used throughout the year to remind patients about the importance of healthy sight. ECPs may also use the TOM tool to decorate their office with posters and display counter cards that convey specific messaging, as well as create their own ads with customized messaging and run them in their local newspaper, magazine or Val Pak mailers.

IT PAYS TO PLAN AHEAD

Running a successful practice is no easy feat, so it's worthwhile to plan ahead as needed. The TOM tool can help simplify the process and make it a rewarding experience for ECPs. With so many options to choose from on the TOM tool, ECPs are treated to endless possibilities when it comes to setting their upcoming goals and achieving them. As its customers' marketing needs change and grow, Transitions is planning on expanding the TOM tool so ECPs will always have easy access to customizable advertising and other powerful marketing tools to brand their practice. Through consistent use of the TOM tool, ECPs and Transitions can work together to better manage their practices - and achieve the mutual goal of healthy sight for every patient.



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NEWS VIEWS

Luxottica Group, Oakley Begin 'New Journey' Melding Marketing, Distribution, Technology

By Cathy Ciccolella
Senior Editor

MILAN—Next month will bring the first definitive look at the “new journey” Luxottica Group and Oakley are undertaking following Luxottica’s \$2.1 billion acquisition of Oakley last month.

Even before the deal closed on Nov. 14, joint integration teams of representatives from both companies were already working to identify opportunities to share the two firms’ expertise and find areas of synergy, defining future operating plans for “the beginning of a new journey together,” according to Luxottica’s chief executive officer, Andrea Guerra.

The acquisition represents “two world-class eyewear organizations joining for the long term,” he noted, with sales targeted at more than \$6 billion for 2008.

Guerra said executives of both Luxottica and Oakley are currently developing a detailed integration plan, to be announced in late January.

In a conference call with financial analysts the day after the acquisition closed, Guerra and Oakley CEO Scott Olivet cited a number of areas on which Luxottica and Oakley executives will focus over the long and short term, with some of that work already underway prior to the closing.

Among the issues being discussed are how (or if) to integrate Oakley’s retail operations—including the Icon sunwear chain, Optical Shop of Aspen and the company’s O stores—under the umbrella of Luxottica’s powerful Luxottica Retail division, and which Oakley products might fit best into Luxottica Retail’s existing stores. Discussions are also underway about which Luxottica eyewear brands and products would be the best fit for Oakley’s current distribution base, which includes a strong presence in the active-lifestyle and sports/performance channels.

Lens technology, including how best to leverage Oakley’s research and development capability with an eye toward new opportunities in prescription sunwear, is also a key topic, Guerra and Olivet said. For example, Oakley’s expertise in sun lens design is already

being used to come up with new products under Luxottica’s Revo sunwear brand for 2008 and 2009.

According to the two executives, other key areas the integration teams are focused on include optimizing sales of the two companies’ brands through each other’s respective retail chains, and maximizing consumer reach through enhanced positioning of sun retail brands. For example, Olivet said tests are underway on how best to present Oakley sunwear, particularly women’s styles, in Luxottica’s Sunglass Hut stores, and on how to position Oakley Rx eyewear in LensCrafters locations. In addition, tests begun before the deal closed on selling Oakley product through about 100 LensCrafters stores

went “extremely well, even with no consumer communication” in terms of marketing, Olivet said; those tests will be expanded to 300 LensCrafters locations in the first quarter, he noted.

The teams are also working to identify sales opportunities for Oakley in emerging markets, while complementing sales structures in many different markets. “The opportunities in wholesale internationally are huge and we can do a better job together, especially in

“We are excited to begin the next chapter in our history.”

—Scott Olivet, Oakley

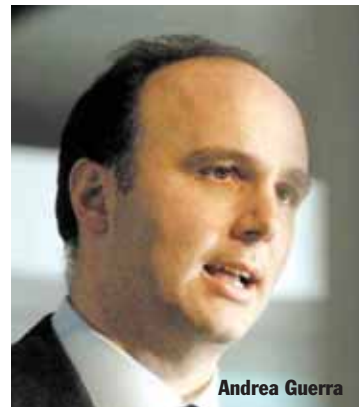
emerging markets,” Guerra said.

Olivet noted that using the two firms’ joint resources to push the Oakley brand message “is key for us,” adding that the merger presents an opportunity to give more prominence to Oakley’s other brands as well.

Guerra said the integration teams are also exploring possible synergies in terms of product sourcing, noting that while the two companies had already shared some suppliers before the acquisition, they are now seeking ways to get better pricing in terms of subassemblies, raw materials and other sourcing elements.

Overall, Luxottica expects the acquisition to result in approximately €100 million annually in operating synergies at the operating income level within

LUXOTTICA
GROUP



Andrea Guerra



Scott Olivet

“The global leader becomes bigger.”
—Andrea Guerra, Luxottica

three years, driven by revenue growth and efficiencies.

With the melding of the two companies, “The global leader becomes bigger,” Guerra stressed, adding, “Luxottica has been strong in the optical world; Oakley has been strong in the active and sports channels. Now we can leverage both, creating a very strong, complementary sales structure in many areas.”

A joint announcement from the two firms described completion of the deal as “the launch of a new group with extraordinary potential, including expected consolidated pro forma net revenues for fiscal year 2007 of €5.7 billion.” Said Guerra on the day the transaction was finalized following approval by Oakley shareholders, “We are extremely pleased with the closing of the merger with Oakley, with whom we have been partners for a long time. We

have long admired the Oakley brand, products, and corporate culture.”

He characterized completion of the acquisition as “the beginning of a new phase for all of us, a journey which will make our group much stronger going forward.”

Olivet commented in that announcement, “The fact that Luxottica and Oakley had similar beginnings, share the same values around the importance of brand and product, and have individuals around the world who have worked closely for years, gives us a very strong foundation for success. While we have tremendous work in front of us, our early integration planning efforts give us confidence that the value of this combination can, in fact, be realized. We are excited to begin the next chapter in our history.”

Under terms of the acquisition agreement, Oakley is now an indirect, wholly owned subsidiary of Luxottica. Oakley’s stock ceased trading on the New York Stock Exchange the day of the closing. ■

CL Maker/Distributor Unilens Vision Reports Record Income for Q1

LARGO, Fla.—Contact lens manufacturer and distributor Unilens Vision Inc. (OTC BB: UVICF.OB) saw its net income climb 22 percent, to a record \$377,296, in the first quarter of fiscal 2008, ended Sept. 30.

The company’s net sales for the period were \$1.7 million, up 4.3 percent over sales in last year’s Q1. The sales increase was primarily the result

of continued growth of Unilens Vision’s C-Vue multifocal contact lenses, which increased approximately 11 percent in the quarter, an announcement said.

Michael Pecora, chief executive officer of Unilens Vision, said the company is “optimistic regarding the outlook for our operating results for the remainder of the current fiscal year.” ■

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NEWS VIEWS

CSC Celebrates 40th Anniversary in Style

SAN JOSE, Calif.—CSC Group gathered 750 customers, vendors, colleagues and friends at the Hilton-DoubleTree hotel here on Dec. 1 for a grand celebration of its 40th anniversary. The Watsonville, California-based company, which operates one of the largest and most successful independent optical wholesale laboratories in the U.S., used the occasion of its second annual OptiFair to thank supporters and honor CSC founder, president and CEO Dong K. Kim and his associates. The event included a reception, vendors' exhibition, formal dinner, an award presentations and entertainment provided by a live Las Vegas-style revue band.

Among the highlights of the event was a video presentation recapping CSC's history and presentations by guest speakers Mike Disanto of Essilor, Jeff Hopkins of Carl Zeiss

Vision, Dr. Edwin Liu, OD of Foothill Optometric, Dr. Philip Ong, OD, president of the Santa Clara County Optometric Society and past president of the Bay Area Optometric Council, and Bob Colucci, president of the Independent Distribution Division of Essilor of America.

Dong Kim also spoke to the audience, which included his sons Mark Kim, Supreme Court Supervising Judge for Long Beach, Catalina and San Pedro Superior Court and Robert Kim, corporate counsel for CSC Group.

In an exclusive interview with VM two days before the event, Dong Kim recalled how he built CSC from a small optical distributing company into a \$25 million dollar a year wholesale powerhouse. The Korean-born entrepreneur came to the U.S. in 1958 as a college exchange student. After earning bachelor's degrees in law and economics and business administration he became a silent partner and investor in Continental Sales Corp. in Santa Cruz, Calif.

"I was educated and trained to be a lawyer, but an opportunity came and I took over an ailing business at that time," said Kim. "I started out with no optical knowledge and with negative capital. It was difficult going."

CSC was one of the first companies to introduce frames from Korea and Japan in U.S. market, although the products not well received at that time, the late '60s and early '70s, according to Kim.

"The first five years was tough," he said. "I thought the product was good. With hard effort and consistency I thought I'd win over the support of the doctors, so I kept digging. In the sixth year, I started getting some support from doctors in Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado, so we built some momentum. That provided a capital foundation and enabled us to bring in some

European products, which gave us a wider range and a kind of 'lift.' The other U.S. companies started to be interested in our distributing their lines."

Soon after, one of Kim's customers who had a master lease in the Gemco chain stores, suggested that CSC start a lab to support them. The idea of having a built-in customer base motivated Kim to open a small lab, which he started with money reinvested from CSC's frame business.

A few years later, Kim bought a second small lab in San Jose called Ocular. He later bought the Vista lab in Phoenix and eventually built a new lab there. CSC then acquired several other labs in the Southwest, including Bahnsen and Micro Coating, an early AR coating lab. CSC sold these labs to Essilor in 2002.

In 2004, CSC moved its headquarters and main lab to Watsonville, near the San Francisco Bay area, where the frame distribution division, prescription fulfillment, and AR coating lab are

Some of the 750 guests who attended CSC's second annual OptiFair.



(left) Dong K. Kim, president & CEO of CSC Group addressing the crowd (center). William Inman, senior vice president and COO of CSC Laboratories, served as MC. (right) Dr. Philip Ong, O.D., president of the Santa Clara County Optometric Society and past president of the Bay Area Optometric Council, giving a congratulatory speech.

consolidated into a single location. The move was largely precipitated by changes in the market, Kim said.

"Because my lens suppliers became competitors, and the delivery system has become quicker and more efficient, and because experienced technicians not available everywhere, we thought we should centralize rather than decentralize," he said. "Our plan was to build a mega-sized lab and try to supply customers more or less on a national scale." CSC services customers in 30 states, he added.

The Watsonville facility is equipped with robotic surfacing and edging equipment that has boosted CSC's production to 1,500 Rx jobs a day (the lab has a capacity of 3,000 Rx's a day). Using three Satisloh coaters working 16 to 18 hours a day, CSC produces about 750 pairs of AR lenses a day, and can produce as many as 850 pairs. Its AR lens brands include Crizal Alizé with Clearguard, Zeiss and RF Endura EZ.

CSC continues to grow its sizeable frame business, which includes both designer and private label brands. The latest addition to its product mix is the high-end Gattinoni line, which CSC debuted with a mini-fashion show at OptiFair.

At a time when many men his age are retiring, Kim intends to keep

pushing ahead. "I'm executing my game plan, but I'm not even 60 percent through yet," he told VM. —Andrew Karp and Marge Axelrad ■■



Pam Colucci and Bob Colucci, (c) president of the Independent Distribution Division of Essilor of America, talking with Dong Kim.



Dong Kim talking with Ed DeRosa, vice president, sales and marketing for Signet Armorlite.



Salesman of the Year award presented by Dong K. Kim to Juan Carlos Moreno. Moreno was presented with a framed certificate and a new Honda Accord EX.



A Vendor Award was presented to Carl Zeiss Vision by William Inman (left). Accepting the award were Jeff Hopkins (center left) and Carol Babcock, both of Carl Zeiss Vision. CSC also presented Vendor Awards to Essilor of America, Shamir Insight, Signet Armorlite, Transitions Optical, Vision-Ease Lens X-Cel Optical and Younger Optics.

NEWS VIEWS

Lucky Brand Jeans Licenses REM for Ophthalmic and Sun



REM Eyewear will debut Lucky Brand Spectacles in 2008.

LOS ANGELES— Lucky Brand Jeans is announcing the launch of Lucky Brand Spectacles. Under a licensing agreement with Sun Valley, Calif.-based REM Eyewear, the five-year, worldwide agreement calls for both new sunwear and optical frame collections geared to optical retailers, department and specialty stores as well as select Lucky Brand neighborhood jeans stores.

Rooted in rock 'n' roll with a signature sense of humor, Lucky Brand Spectacles will be a complete collection of retro eyewear for men and women.

The premiere collection consists of 15 optical frames available in January 2008, with three additional styles to be released in April 2008, at independent optical retailers nationwide. In addition, 12 sunglass styles will be introduced at select Lucky Brand neighborhood jeans stores and luckybrandjeans.com this month and expanded in March 2008 to better department stores, independent specialty and optical retailers nationwide.

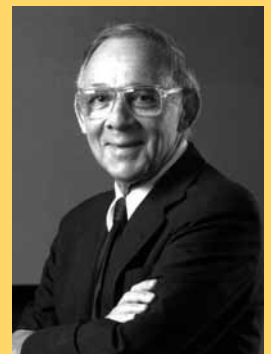
Barry Perlman, co-founder Lucky Brand Jeans, commented, "We chose to partner with REM because they demonstrate the same high-standards and passion for their eyewear, as we have for Lucky Brand Jeans. From the beginning, they really wanted to understand us, and have given Lucky Brand Spectacles personal enthusiasm and attention to detail, upholding our brand image of great quality."

Mike Hundert, president and CEO of REM Eyewear, said, "Lucky Brand is one of the coolest brands on the planet. It has a distinct design point-of-view that translates exceedingly well to eyewear. That, combined with the compatible nature of our corporate cultures is making this launch both exciting and

promising. Plus, it's a whole lot of fun." Lucky Brand Jeans designs and produces denim, sportswear, knits, wovens, outerwear, T-shirts, active wear and has recently launched Lucky Kid. Additional Lucky Brand licensed products include swimwear and accessories for men and women. Lucky Brand Jeans has over 165 neighborhood jeans stores nationwide and internationally. The Lucky Brand collections are carried at better department and specialty stores and at www.luckybrandjeans.com. Liz Claiborne, Inc. acquired 85 percent of

the company in 1999. REM Eyewear designs and markets eyeglass frames and sunglasses under a variety of brand names, including: Converse, Jones New York, Lauren Hutton, Barbie, Cosmopolitan, and Rembrand. REM provides premium high fashion over-the-counter reading glasses under its accessories division, Readers Plus. Additionally, its luxury division, Base Curve, is the licensee for Carolina Herrera and John Varvatos. REM distributes its eyewear in more than 60 countries around the world. ■■

Optical Pioneer Eli Shapiro, OD, Dies at 85



Eli Shapiro, OD

CARLSBAD, Calif.—Services were held in Corona Del Mar, Calif., for Eli Shapiro, OD, founder of the NuVision optical chain based in Flint, Mich., who died here on Nov. 24.

After serving in the Navy in World War II and graduating from the Southern College of Optometry, Shapiro returned to Flint and opened his first optometric office there, later moving his practice to a jewelry store, where eyewear was traditionally sold at the time.

In the mid-1950s, Shapiro and his brother, Arthur, purchased a downtown optometry practice called NuVision. Shapiro later bought out his brother's share of the business and expanded NuVision across Michigan and into Florida, California, New Jersey and northern Indiana, taking the company public along the way. Shapiro's son-in-law, Jonathan Raven, later became the chain's president; Shapiro served as chairman and chief executive officer.

In 1995, NuVision was acquired by New York City-based American Vision Centers, becoming a wholly owned subsidiary of AVC; Shapiro retired after the sale. At that point NuVision had 125 locations—78 company-owned and 47 franchised—and had reported sales of \$59.1 million for fiscal 1994. The company was also an early player in the managed-vision business through its Vision Maintenance Organization, which provided third-party vision care in Michigan and New Jersey.

Two years after AVC bought NuVision, the NuVision stores were purchased by Pearle Vision—which had itself been acquired by Cole Vision in November 1996—to give Pearle a stronger foothold in the Michigan marketplace.

Shapiro is survived by his widow, Esther; daughters Leslie Raven and Jan Albert; son Brad Shapiro; and eight grandchildren.

Brad Shapiro, principal in C&E Vision Services and Rudy Project North America, said of his father, "My Dad was a true mensch who through his deep sense of caring for others touched the lives of many people. His easy-going and unpretentious nature resulted in his being loved by everyone. He was respected by his colleagues, suppliers and competitors. He will be sorely missed."

Jonathan Raven, now a Michigan-based legal and business consultant, told VM, "Eli was one of the industry's true pioneers. Like Stanley Pearle OD and Donald Golden OD, he was one of those who created a new way of looking at the optical business. At a time when optical frames were in black cases, inside a drawer, he saw an opportunity to put eyewear out front and create a retail, customer-oriented atmosphere. He also weathered a lot of criticism from within the profession as he worked to permit ODs and optical chains to advertise prices for eyewear. He greatly influenced the market."

The family noted that donations in Shapiro's name can be made to the Flint Jewish Federation, via email at info@ujc.org or by phone UJCDirect at (212) 284-6944. ■■

L'Amy America Names Fay Brand Manager for Theory



Genevieve Fay

WILTON, Conn.— L'Amy America has announced the appointment of Genevieve Fay to the position of worldwide brand manager for Theory eyewear and marketing manager for Lunettes L'Amy.

"We are pleased that Genevieve has joined our marketing team to head up the exciting launch of Theory eyewear worldwide and to further fuel the continued expansion of the L'Amy brand in

North America," said Stephen Rappoport, president of L'Amy America.

In her new position, Fay will be responsible for managing the worldwide development of Theory eyewear in the optical and non-optical channels of distribution, as well as the marketing of L'Amy's house brand, Lunettes L'Amy to the optical industry. Fay will report directly to Rappoport.

Fay joins L'Amy America with over five years experience in the optical industry, most recently as director of marketing for Silhouette Optical. ■■

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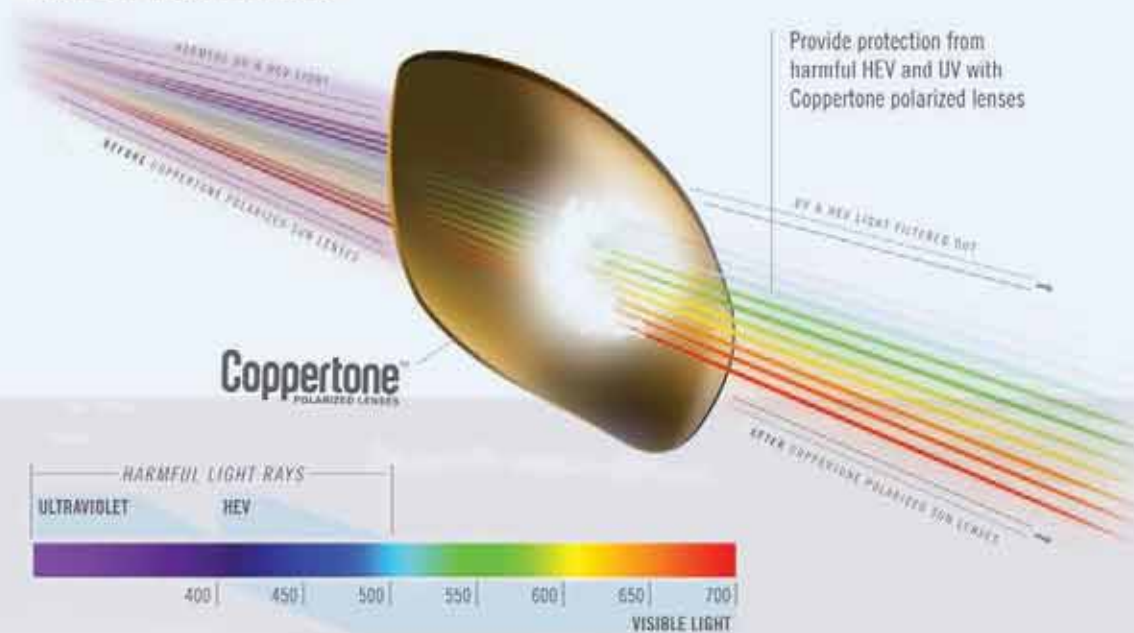
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NEWS VIEWS

Signet Armorlite Restructures Sales Organization

INDIANAPOLIS—Signet Armorlite has restructured its sales organization.

According to Ed DeRosa, executive vice president of the San Marcos, Calif.-based spectacle lens company, Jim Misco,

who has been vice president of marketing, has been named vice president of sales. Misco will relocate to Indiana, where he will head the company's sales group for North America, and will report to DeRosa.

Jan Kubiak will continue her responsibilities as marketing manager, and also will now report to DeRosa.

"The board is looking to free me up from day-to-day management of the sales group so that I have more time to focus on some of the strategic opportunities ahead of us," DeRosa told *VM*, adding, "The new structure is effective immediately and will complement the way we want to face the market, given the changes and evolution of the business."

The change involved a rightsizing of the Signet sales force. Misco will oversee a team of 32 salespeople in North America, including five regional managers. In addition, Jeff LaPlante, Signet's national manager of training and education, will report to him.

"These are positive changes for Signet to best approach the marketplace. We look forward to our national sales meeting in San Diego in January, where we'll introduce our 2008 initiatives," Misco said. ■

3M to Acquire Aeero Technologies for \$1.2 Billion

ST. PAUL, Minn. & INDIANAPOLIS—3M and Aeero Technologies have entered into a definitive agreement for 3M's acquisition of Aeero for a total purchase price of \$1.2 billion, to be financed through a combination of cash and other borrowings. Aeero is a global leader in the personal protection industry and manufactures and markets personal protection and energy absorbing products. The company is owned by funds advised by Permira, a leading global private equity firm, and company management.

Aeero will significantly expand 3M's occupational health and environmental safety platform by adding hearing protection as well as eyewear and fall protection product lines to 3M's existing full-line of respiratory products. The acquisition enables 3M to provide industrial, military and construction customers as well as consumers with a more complete personal protection solution.

"Aeero complements and significantly broadens our core safety and personal protection business, a space which is growing fast and [is] of strategic impor-

tance to the company," said George W. Buckley, 3M chairman, president and CEO. "The combination of 3M's technology, our global reach and well-known safety brand with Aeero's strong product portfolio and brands positions 3M as the global leader in personal protective equipment products. Our powerful international distribution network will enable us to enhance and leverage this asset going forward."

Michael McLain, president and CEO, Aeero Technologies Inc., commented "We believe 3M's solid R&D technology platform and global distribution capabilities will take Aeero's successful brand to the next level and grow this business to its full potential. Our two companies share a similar culture of innovation and operational excellence, and the Aeero team is excited about working with 3M colleagues around the world."

Aeero's sales have increased at a compound annual growth rate of more than 12 percent over the past five years to \$508 million, according to 3M and Aeero. The company's hearing and eye protection brands include E-A-R, Peltor, AOSafety and SafeWaze. ■

Alain Mikli Names Lalloway CEO of N.A. Unit; Relocates HQ Facility

BETHEL, Conn.—Alain Mikli, eyewear designer and head of Alain Mikli International, has named Sean Lalloway to the position of CEO of the company's North American subsidiary, Alain Mikli, Ltd. The company has also relocated its North American headquarters and distribution to a new facility here.

Lalloway was most recently chief financial officer of Mikli's North American business and has been with the company for seven years, primarily overseeing operations. In his new role, he oversees both the U.S. and Canadian business for the French eyewear designer's collections including the Alain Mikli, Mikli par Mikli, Alyson McGee and Philippe Starck collections.

Earlier this fall, the company closed its long-time New York City-based showroom and distribution center and moved operations to a 6,000-square foot facility that the company purchased in Bethel, Conn.

Lalloway said, "We doubled our usable space. We transitioned our customer service, warehousing, accounting and all back-office functions. The goals of the move were to help the company maxi-

mize profit, increase productivity and equip the business for future growth."

Mikli told *VM*, "In light of our growth plans and in an ongoing effort to make the company as efficient as possible, we have moved the administrative offices and the inventory from Manhattan. We determined it was not in our best interest to continue to pay Manhattan rents for an ever larger stock room, or other administrative functions. In Connecticut, we not only save money, but we have enlarged our space for the future growth and will be able to improve service to our customers. Communications should improve and, due to easier access to the stock by our shipping partners, deliveries will be faster."

Mikli also added, "Sean has detailed knowledge of all our operating procedures both in the U.S. and in France and should add significantly to our drive to improve service and initiate new programs."

In addition to the wholesale business, Alain Mikli operates two boutiques in Manhattan, on Madison Avenue (at 77th Street and 57th Street) plus a store that opened last fall in Short Hills, N.J. ■

CIBA Vision, CooperVision Settle Contact-Lens Patent Suit

PLEASANTON, Calif., and ATLANTA—The CooperVision division of The Cooper Companies (NYSE: COO) and CIBA Vision, the eyecare unit of Novartis (NYSE: NVS), reached a global settlement agreement last week that resolves all disputes regarding current patent-infringement litigation between them, according to announcements from the two firms.

CooperVision had alleged that CIBA Vision infringed patented technologies relating to the edge design and rotational stabilization of contact lenses, while CIBA Vision alleged that CooperVision infringed patented technologies relating to silicone

hydrogel CLs. Under the terms of the settlement, the companies have agreed to cross-license rights to these patents, as well as certain other patent rights.

CIBA Vision has licensed its "Nicolson" patents—which cover high-oxygen-transmissible CLs including CIBA's O2Optix, Air Optix and Night & Day silicone hydrogel lenses—to CooperVision. In exchange, CooperVision will pay a royalty on its U.S. sales of Biofinity CLs until 2014, and on net sales outside the U.S. until 2016.

CIBA Vision also has licensed two patent families from CooperVision related to contact lens designs. ■

Caldwell Named President, CEO of Staar Surgical

MONROVIA, Calif.—Barry Caldwell has been named president and chief executive officer of Staar Surgical (Nasdaq: STAA). He succeeds David Bailey, who has become president of the company's international operations and will now be based at Staar's international headquarters in Nidau, Switzerland.

Caldwell was elected to Staar's board of directors at the company's annual shareholders' meeting in May.

Caldwell comes to Staar after serving until October as president, CEO and a member of the board at Iridex (Nasdaq: IRIX). Before that, he was with Alcon Laboratories (NYSE: ACL). ■

NEWS VIEWS

VCA Forms Vision Protection Committee

ALEXANDRIA, Va.—Recognizing the potential of the vision protection market—from sports and industrial safety eyewear to computer vision lenses to home eye and sun protection—the Vision Council of America (VCA) has formed a new group to address this issue, the Vision Protection Committee. The committee, led by industry veteran Tom Goeltz, is dedicated to expanding the protective eyewear market on behalf of all segments of the industry.

“Protective eyewear is used in so many different types of activities. Forming this committee really gives us a chance to focus in on these areas and

dedicate the appropriate resources to promote vision protection and educate consumers about the need to take care of their eyes,” said Goeltz.

The committee, which held its inaugural meeting at International Vision Expo West, will utilize marketing, public relations, training and education to get its messages out to both eyecare professionals and consumers. By tracking government issues, standards and regulations, as well as conducting research, the committee will be able to provide valuable information to its members.

“VCA is a unique organization in that we can adapt to our members’ needs, no

matter how large or small,” said Ed Greene, VCA’s chief executive officer. “The creation of the Vision Protection Committee is a great example of how VCA is able to serve all of its members.”

Protection Committee, please contact Tom Goeltz, VCA Vision Protection Committee consultant at tjgoeltz@comcast.net. ■■

For more information on the Vision Consumers’ Sunwear Buying Habits Revealed in Jobson Research Report

NEW YORK—Where consumers shop for fashion sunglasses, their perceptions about the best place to purchase sunwear and consumer spending patterns are included in the latest “Insight Survey” called “2007 Sunglass Purchasing Decisions,” part of a series of exclusive reports from Jobson Optical Research.

The Insight Survey on Consumer Sunwear Purchasing Decisions is based on July 2007 data.

Other reports in Jobson Optical

Research’s “Insight Survey” series include: “2007 U.S. Eyewear and Eye Care Consumer Patterns,” “Vision Correction Trends and Eyeglass Purchase Decisions,” “2007 Consumer Perceptions of Managed Vision Care,” and the “2007 Adult Consumer Eye Exam Experience” reports. ■■

Each are priced at \$99. For ordering information, contact Beth Briggs at bbriggs@jobson.com or (212) 219-7825.

Protective Optics Inc. Officially Changes Name to Wiley X, Inc.

LIVERMORE, Calif.—The family-owned and operated Protective Optics, Inc. has officially changed its name to Wiley X, Inc., formerly known as Wiley X Eyewear by Protective Optics, Inc.

After more than two decades developing Wiley X eyewear for the civilian, military and law enforcement markets and working to raise brand awareness within each of its target market segments the company has decided to focus on a unified front leading to the official change of its corporate name from Protective Optics, Inc. to Wiley X, Inc. according to a statement from the company.

“We recently celebrated our 20th anniversary, and it’s been an honor to consistently set the benchmark for safety, style, quality and versatility in such a wide variety of key markets,” said Myles J. Freeman, vice president of sales for Wiley X. “Wiley X may have built its foundation as a provider of protective eyewear for the military, but the brand has grown to now resonate among enthusiasts within industries such as fishing, snowboarding, motorcycles, NASCAR, hunting, law enforcement and casual wear. We are thrilled to officially incorporate the company’s new name.” ■■

VSP Gets Customer Service Award for Sixth Straight Year

RANCHO CORDOVA, Calif.—For the sixth consecutive year, VSP Vision Care has received the World Class Customer Satisfaction Award from Service Quality Measurement Group.

“These are terrific accomplishments given that, in the past two years, we have added over 200 new agents into our call centers,” said Laura Costa, VSP’s vice president of customer service. “We also had our live call volume increase by 20 percent in 2007.”

VSP also received SQM customer service awards for “Highest Customer Satisfaction in the Insurance Industry” for the fourth consecutive year; “Call Center

World Class Call Certification” for the second consecutive year (as one of only 3 percent of the companies evaluated to receive this award; and “Highest Employee Satisfaction in the Insurance Industry” for the fourth consecutive year.

Said VSP’s president and chief executive officer, Rob Lynch, “This award shows the importance we put on great customer service for our members, doctors and clients.” VSP’s customer satisfaction was judged using 8,700 customer telephone surveys taken from a random selection of calls; a call center must score 80 percent or better in the very satisfied category to achieve a world class rating. ■■



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NEWS VIEWS

OLA Names 2007 Awards of Excellence Winners

INDIANAPOLIS—At a gala ceremony here last month, officials of the Optical Laboratories Association (OLA) named the winners of the OLA 2007 Awards of Excellence. The awards ceremony provided the climax to the OLA's annual meeting, which began on Nov. 15.

The winners of the 2007 OLA Awards of Excellence are:

Best in Dress Frames (two-way tie)

Flexure Memory Metal Collection:
Capri Optics

Mount Eyewear Pure Titanium TQ:
Tuscany Eyewear

Best in Safety Frames

SW06: Titmus

Best in Specialty Frames

Polarized Sunglass Model 60: Tuscany
Eyewear

Best in Children's Frames

Nickelodeon SpongeBob SquarePants
Nautical Toon: Nouveau Eyewear

Best in Lens Materials

Drivewear Activated
by Transitions: Younger
Optics

Best in Lens Design

GT2 by Zeiss: Carl
Zeiss Vision

Best in Lens Treatments

Super Hi Vision: Hoya
Vision Care

Best in Marketing

The Art & Science of
DriveWear Activated by

Transitions Education Tour and Market-

ing Materials: Younger Optics

Best in Surfacing Equipment

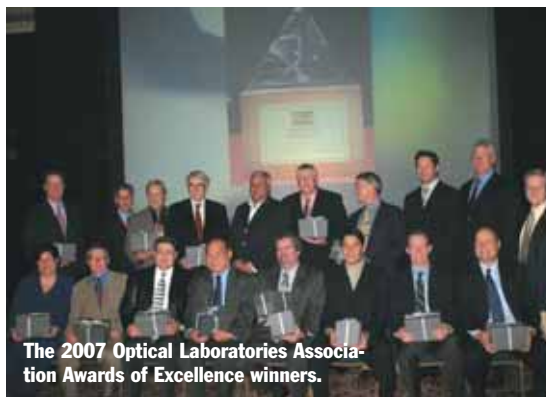
DTL Generator Series: Gerber Coburn

Best in Surfacing Materials and Tools

Combobulator: Digital Vision

Best in Finishing Equipment

ES-3: Satisloh North America

Best in Finishing Materials and Tools

The 2007 Optical Laboratories Association Awards of Excellence winners.



The Transitions Optical team accepted the OLA's Director's Choice Award.

HydroEdge: DAC Vision

Best in Lens Treatment Equipment

G4: Satisloh North America

Best in Accessory Products

Sun Pod Sunclip System: Hilco

Satisloh North America was named

Best Exhibitor. Transitions Optical won

the OLA's Director's Choice Award,

which honors individuals, companies or

organizations who the OLA's board of directors believes have made outstanding contributions to the ophthalmic industry.

The Awards of Excellence is the OLA's way of recognizing the effort the industry manufacturers invest in the research and development of new products. This year marks the 21st anniversary of the Awards. ■■

VM's Top Labs Honored at OLA



Vision Monday's Top Labs were honored at the annual party sponsored by Jobson Medical Information.

INDIANAPOLIS—In what has become a time-honored tradition, OLA attendees and exhibitors celebrated the release of **Vision Monday's** Top Labs 2007 report and the presentation of LabTalk magazine's Optical Laboratories Web Site of the Year at a party here last month. The party, which was hosted and sponsored by Jobson Medical Information, featured a special musical performance by Andy Karp and his fellow "Jobsonaires." They sang this year's Top Labs theme song "Free Formin," as partygoers chimed in singing backup for the song's chorus.

VM's annual Top Labs report, now in its 16th year, ranks both independent and supplier-owned U.S. wholesale labs by annual Rx sales. The Top Labs report was published in the Nov. 19 issue of **Vision Monday**. Or to access the report, go to www.visionmonday.com.

Laramy-K Optical was given the Optical Laboratories Web Site of the Year Award and was presented with a trophy by Christie Walker, editor of LabTalk magazine. In total, 10 laboratories were honored in the ranking. Laramy-K Optical, Cherry Optical, Soderberg, Pech Optical, Classic Optical, Central Optical, Advance Optical, Katz and Klein, Diversified Ophthalmics, and FEA Industries.

For the first time in the history of the award, nominations for the 8th Annual Optical Laboratory Web Site of the Year Award were solicited from eyecare professionals through Vision Monday's online survey tool. Over 300 ECPs responded by nominating their optical laboratory's Web site, filling out a survey indicating the number of times they visited their lab's Web site and how well it met their needs.

"Since the purpose of a lab's Web site is to provide information to their customers, the ECP, we felt ECPs would be the most qualified to judge the quality and effectiveness of the sites," Walker explained. "The value to the ECP has always been a factor in selecting the top 10 Web sites. This year we just went to the source and

Hall of Fame Honors Six Industry Veterans

INDIANAPOLIS—The OLA inducted six industry veterans into its Hall of Fame at a banquet held here last month during their annual meeting. This year's honorees were recognized for their contributions and years of service to the optical industry during the eighth annual dinner event held at the Westin Indianapolis.

"This event kicked off the OLA 2007 and was an opportunity for all labs and suppliers to join together to celebrate the heritage of the optical lab industry," according to outgoing OLA president, Edward A. Dietz, III. One of the many changes in the OLA 2007 meeting is the rescheduling of the Hall of Fame Banquet to Thursday evening and OLA delegates responded with a substantial increase in ticket sales, according to OLA Program Chair, J. Larry Enright.



OLA Hall of Fame honorees (l to r) Ginny Hollins, daughter of Bill A. West (honored posthumously), David A. Beach, James P. Dougher, John L. Enright, Ronald Ray Steffey, Amos "Tex" Williams, and Joan West, wife of Bill A. West.

The following Hall of Fame Honorees were recognized for their outstanding efforts—each in their unique way—in developing and growing the optical lab industry, according to the OLA. Honorees included David A. Beach, James P. Dougher, John L. Enright, Ronald Ray Steffey, Amos "Tex" Williams and Billy A. West who was inducted posthumously. ■■

asked the ECP directly."

From the 300 nominations, the top 10 sites were selected based on the number of nominations they received from ECPs. A panel of four eyecare professionals then reviewed the top 10 sites and ranked them in order, with one site receiving the honor of Optical Laboratory Web Site of the Year. ■■



LabTalk's editor, Christie Walker (r) presents Jack and Janet Benjamin of Laramy-K Optical with the Optical Laboratory Web Site of the Year Award.

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NEWS VIEWS

Aoyama Partners With Lego for Children's Eyewear Line

RONKONKOMA, N.Y.—Aoyama Optical has signed a licensing agreement with Lego Systems A/S to develop a full line of children's ophthalmic frames and sunglasses featuring the classic Lego brand and play themes. The collections are planned to hit high end optical and sunglass specialty stores by June 2008.

"We believe that Aoyama's expertise in high end optical design, engineering and manufacturing combined with a



reputation for developing unique, fashion forward collections for some of the world's best known brands was what enabled us to win the Lego account," said Yoshihiko Aoyama, president and founder of Aoyama. "We approached this

opportunity with the idea that young children's taste for ophthalmic frames and sunglasses should be much more creative than what is currently offered to them and their parents and worked closely with Lego to develop an innova-

tive line which embodies the creativity that Lego truly stands for."

"We have been looking for a kid's name to complete our collection and this is an amazing opportunity," said David Chernoff, president of Aoyama USA. "The industry can look forward to an exciting line of quality, fun and functional frames for kids. Along with POP that will stand out in every store that it is placed in."

The Lego Group is a privately-held, family-owned company based in Billund, Denmark. As one of the world's leading

manufacturers of high-quality, educational play materials for children the company is committed to the development of children's creative and imaginative abilities.

"We are very excited to have Aoyama as a new member of our family," said Stephanie Lawrence, director of licensing for The Lego Company. "They immediately understood the Lego brand, the creativity and passion it instills in children and, most importantly how to apply that creativity and passion to a wonderful, innovative collection of upscale children's optical product." ■

Vision-Ease Lens Receives Chief Executive Network Innovation Award

RAMSEY, Minn.—Vision-Ease Lens, based here, was recently honored by the Chief Executive Network (CEN) with the "Best Disruptive Product Innovation" award for the development and successful deployment of its LifeRx photochromic lenses.

At the CEN Innovation Conference in New Orleans, La., on Nov. 2, CEN recognized Vision-Ease Lens with the Innovation award for LifeRx's multi-patented technological achievement and revenue growth in the marketplace.

"Our LifeRx lens brand has changed our customers' perception of

Vision-Ease Lens from that of a specialty supplier to that of a broad line competitor," said Doug Hepper, president and CEO of Vision-Ease Lens. "With that, we've been able to meet Chief Executive Network's high level of business standards, and are honored to be recognized for our accomplishments with LifeRx."

Chief Executive Network is an industry sector organization for CEO's and senior executives. The network supports its membership with current information on best practices, recent trends and technological advances. ■

Vistakon Launches CL 'Makeover' Tool, Gets FDA OK for Oasys as Bandage Lens

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.—Johnson & Johnson Vision Care's Vistakon division is now offering consumers offers iMakeover, a virtual "makeover" experience to promote its Acuvue 2 Colours contact lenses.

Visitors to www.imakeover.acuvue.com can upload their own photos, then "try on" Acuvue CLs in 10 different colors. Users can save, download and print their iMakeover photo, along with a "free trial pair" certificate, to take to their eyecare professional.

Another Vistakon lens, the Acuvue Oasys with HydraClear Plus, was recently granted an additional indication by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration for therapeutic use as a bandage lens for certain acute and chronic ocular conditions. Acuvue Oasys for therapeutic use can also provide vision correction during heal-

ing if required, according to Vistakon.

In a clinical study for this therapeutic indication, study records were evaluated from 43 subjects who were fit with Acuvue Oasys in therapeutic applications, the company said.

In other news, a new survey sponsored by Vistakon and Road & Travel magazine indicates that nearly one-third of all drivers say they have trouble seeing while driving at night.

According to "Shedding Light on Driving in the Dark," a nationwide survey of 515 vision-corrected Americans, 32 percent of respondents said they have difficulty seeing all or most of the time while driving in the dark. More than one-fourth (26 percent) reported trouble seeing signs or exits; 20 percent acknowledge difficulty seeing animals or pedestrians, while 20 percent also have difficulty seeing turns

International Special Olympics Honors Dr. Paul Berman

NEW YORK—When the International Special Olympics Committee presented its 2007 awards for exceptional service at the World Games in Shanghai, China, Dr. Paul Berman, OD of Hackensack, N.J., received Special Olympics' highest honor—the Spirit Award—for Special Lifetime Global Leadership in Promoting Human Dignity.

At a star studded event in the Shanghai Oriental Arts Theater that was broadcast throughout China, Dr. Berman was recognized along with honorees, Nelson Mandela, Governor Arnold

Schwartzenegger, Yao Ming, Nadia Comaneci and Vanessa Williams. Celebrating with them were Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Tim Shriver, Maria Shriver, Quincy Jones, Colin Farrell, Bianca Jagger, Bart Connor and Scott Hamilton.

Dr. Berman previously received the World Council of Optometry, "Optometrist of the Year Award, 2006," the highest honor in his profession, and was also named, America's Top Optometrist, by the



Dr. Paul Berman, OD of Hackensack, N.J., (left) received Special Olympics' highest honor—the Spirit Award—for Special Lifetime Global Leadership in Promoting Human Dignity.

Consumers' Research Council of America in 2006. He has been team optometrist to hockey's N.J. Devils since 1997 and is a vision consultant to football's N.Y. Giants.

Dr. Berman founded the Special Olympics Opening Eyes Program in 1991, which is dedicated to an often neglected need—improving the vision of persons with intellectual disabilities. Since 1999, this program has been funded by grants from The Lions Club International Foundation. ■

in the road. Twenty-two percent also reported problems in judging distance while driving at night.

Survey respondents complained of eyestrain (38 percent), dry or tired eyes (34 percent), fatigue (25 percent), headaches (19 percent), inability to focus (18 percent) and double or blurred vision (15 percent) while driving in the dark. Sixty-one percent say headlights

from oncoming traffic or cars behind them are particularly bothersome, while 48 percent reported experiencing glare or light sensitivity while driving at night.

And although 73 percent of these drivers said they believe correcting their vision problems would improve their ability to drive in low-light conditions, only 27 percent have talked to an ECP about treatment options. ■

NEWS VIEWS

Augen Optics, Transitions Set Partnership

PINELLAS PARK, Fla.—Augen Optics and Transitions Optical have announced that the companies are renewing their relationship, creating a partnership that will combine Augen Optics unique lens design technologies with Transitions Optical's advanced photochromic technology. Through the partnership, Augen Optics, an international lens design and

manufacturing company based in Ensenada, Mexico, will offer Transitions lenses in its 1.50 and Trivex lens materials for its Centurion Series, a line of lenses specifically designed to provide a wider field of natural vision.

Committed to applying advanced technology to eyeglass lenses and optical products, Augen Optics lenses are designed

using patented, proprietary developments in free-form mold making technology.

"We're proud to be a technology-driven organization dedicated to all phases of the eyeglass lens development and delivery process," said Dr. Marco Antonio Machado, PhD, founder and chief executive officer of Augen Optics. "The partnership will enable the incorporation of

Transitions Optical's leading photochromic technology into Augen Optics' unique product line."

"Combining our distinctive lens designs with photochromic technology from Transitions will allow us to expand availability of high-performance products for everyday vision needs," added Dick Kapash, president, Augen Optics. ■

PSI to be Exclusive Distributor of Augen's Centurion Lenses

INDIANAPOLIS—Practical Systems, Inc. (PSI) has signed an agreement with Augen Optics to be the exclusive distributor of the new Centurion Series lenses to the U.S., Caribbean and South and Central American markets.

"Having the opportunity to promote the Augen Optics products to new markets is extremely exciting for all of us at PSI," said Patrick Hernandez, president of PSI, who announced the agreement at the Optical Laboratories Association's annual meeting here in November. "PSI has enjoyed a long relationship with Augen Optics and Dr. Machado. Both of our companies are driven to bring our customers the best in process materials, equipment and leading technologies."

"This is a marriage made in heaven," said Dick Kapash, president of Augen Optics at the press conference held here. "This partnership made sense to Patrick and made sense to us as well. So we are off and running. Some of PSI's sales team have already started selling the lenses."

The same technology used by the Hubble Space Telescope has been applied to the creation of Augen's Centurion lens blanks featuring a patented Aspheric and Double Aspheric High Definition lens. This new technology is specifically designed to provide natural vision all around the lens without induced optical aberrations. Centurion lens designs are manufactured with computerized 5-axis digital surfacing gen-



Patrick Hernandez of PSI, left, with Dick Kapash of Augen Optics, after announcing a distribution agreement at last month's OLA meeting in Indianapolis.

erators and polishing machines resulting in a "High Definition Lens." ■

VisionWeb Portal Is Wide Open

Continued from page 8

Later, Transitions Optical became VisionWeb's seventh equity partner.

The Internet portal soon began expanding its offerings beyond online ordering and lab management. In mid-2003, for example, VisionWeb took over the hosting and support of more than 20,000 ECP Web sites previously hosted and administered by Essilor, while offering to help VisionWeb members create a free Web site customized for their practice as a membership benefit.

VisionWeb then launched a new online managed-vision service, so members could verify patient eligibility, process electronic claims, and check claims status on behalf of multiple payers through its single site.

Other evolutions have occurred over the years. In late 2003, VisionWeb introduced a tiered ordering structure, adding the fee-based VisionWeb Enhanced multi-payer insurance-transaction processing service as an enhancement to the existing—and

free—VisionWeb Essential service. The company announced its first affiliation with a practice management (PM) system, OfficeMate Software Solutions, early in 2004; today, close to a dozen PM systems are integrated for orders, more than 20 PM systems have signed to have this capability and over two dozen PM systems are able to send claims directly. In 2005, a new VisionWeb Connect program provided streamlined order-processing for ECPs and their labs, so labs could enjoy the benefits of being a part of the VisionWeb supplier network, regardless of the lab-management software system running their operations.

Last year, VisionWeb launched an improved online frames ordering service for its members. And the company continues to refine its services. Recently, VisionWeb unveiled a new electronic remittance advice management service, which Mike O'Malley, VisionWeb's chief operating officer, said "allows us to offer a more comprehensive solution to eyecare providers for managing the processes and

cash flows involved with insurance processing." Also new is an online training program covering VisionWeb's services, plus a coding consultant service to help practices identify opportunities for improved claim reimbursement rates and cash flow.

VisionWeb also continues to work closely with its ECP members to determine what additional services might be most helpful for them, guided by vice president of professional relations Stan Yamane, OD.

So VisionWeb has come a long way since its launch five years ago. As Stoerr said when he became VisionWeb's CEO in mid-2002, "There's always resistance to change, which we've seen in other areas of the optical business. But if something is good and works better, it will fly. I have a deep conviction that in five years most doctors will be saying, 'I wonder how we ever did things before VisionWeb?'"

And Saddington summed up, "Our reputation is growing, and we hope we are viewed as a company that will help suppliers, ECPs and practice management firms be the best they can be." ■

Online Services

Continued from page 8

their practices going forward. Said Cooper, "Staff is the number one issue for all practices, and having a Web-based portal offering quality training should be a huge success."

Larger groups of ECPs are also making use of VisionWeb's online services.

Joe Mallinger, OD and MBA, president and chief executive officer of Vision West, Inc. (VWI), with 5,000 members nationwide, stated, "All of us know that our industry is changing and consolidating. Every eyecare professional has a computer, and a high percentage of them are using practice management software programs today. With the advent of computers in offices and more reasonable costs for programs, technology is being recognized as a business-management tool, and something our VWI customers want to know more about. As a result, partnering in a business relationship with VisionWeb became an important priority, and about nine months ago, we started new discussions with them.

"As part of our exploration, I met with frame, lens and contact-lens suppliers as well as practice-management companies to determine what's happening today with online ordering. Through one-on-ones with industry leaders, it was clear there's been a major upswing in the last year in particular.

"As a buying group, we look across the ophthalmic industry and can see that what's happening in our industry has parallels in other fields. As technology has become part of our lives, online ordering and technology reduces costs, increases net income from operations and allows ECPs' staff and themselves to be open to new opportunities."

Mallinger said VWI has been working on a pilot project with VisionWeb for the last few months and is testing in a target market now. The group intends to roll out the program to its members in the first and second quarters of 2008. ■



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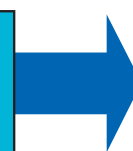
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Hoya Names Brad Main Head of Training and Technical Resources

LEWISVILLE, Texas—Hoya Vision Care, North America, has named Brad Main manager of training and technical



Brad Main

Main has more than 25 years experience in the optical industry. He started his career with Hoya in 2001 as a territory sales manager. Most recently, he served as the Northeast regional training manager.

Main is ABO-certified and is a Fellow in the National Academy of Opticianry. He serves on the advisory board for the opticianry program at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College in Richmond, Va.

Advanced Medical Optics COO Meier Named President as Well

SANTA ANA, Calif.—Richard (Randy) Meier, chief operating officer of Advanced Medical Optics (NYSE: EYE) has been named president of the company as well. Meier retains his COO title and responsibilities, which include leadership of the company's eyecare and cataract/implant businesses, global customer services and manufacturing operations.

The title of president was previously held by James Mazzo, who remains Advanced Medical Optics' chairman and chief executive officer.

Meier joined AMO in 2002 as corporate vice president and chief financial officer, then held various positions including executive vice president, operations, and president, eyecare business. In February, he was named COO and chief financial officer, a position he held until October, when Michael Lambert joined the company as CFO.

CEO, COO of U.K. Contact Lens Manufacturer UltraVision Take Back Firm's Reins

LEIGHTON BUZZARD, U.K.—The two top executives of British contact lens manufacturer UltraVision—group chief executive officer J. Keith Lomas and group chief operating officer John Clamp—have taken back the helm of the company after Nick Loan stepped down following a 12-month stint as managing director.

Loan joined UltraVision in 2006 after more than 20 years with Bausch & Lomb; he “will now be seeking a fresh challenge within the optical industry,” according to an UltraVision announcement.

Said Lomas, “Nick has achieved what we set out to do together with our new positioning and successful silicone hydrogel launch. His involvement freed up John Clamp, group COO, and me to grow our patented technology base and make strategic long-term third party partnerships, which we have achieved in the U.S., Japan, Australia and Europe.”

Younger Optics Adds Retail Lens Consultant to Southern States

TORRANCE, Calif.—Chris Gallagher has joined Younger Optics as a retail lens consultant to the Southern U.S. Based



Chris Gallagher

out of Birmingham, Ala., Gallagher will lend support to dispensaries in his home state as well as parts of Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina and Arkansas.

As retail lens consultant, he will educate managers and staff on the variety of Younger products available to them and provide sales and point-of-purchase materials, particularly for Younger's NuPolar, Drivewear and Trilog product lines.

Gallagher brings more than 14 years experience and a detailed knowledge of the optical industry to the ECPs in his area. A graduate of the University of South Alabama, he has worked with both chain retail and independent optometrists as retail manager, lab manager and general manager.

Satisloh Taps U.S. Military for New Recruits

GERMANTOWN, Wis.—In an ongoing goal of regionalizing its field service, Satisloh recently added five new regional field service engineers (FSE): Artemio Manalang, Southeastern region; Chris Nofziger, Rick Merz, and Brian Magley, all in the Western region; and Brian Ober, Midwest region.

“Recruiting from the U.S. military gives us people who have a critical combination of skills—including technical, organizational, and a great desire to learn,” said Mike Olmsted, vice president of outside operations for Satisloh.

Olmsted noted that Satisloh's transition from a centralized service model to a more regionalized field service force, which involves putting FSEs in

population hubs, reduces travel time and cost of services. The closer proximity helps customers and field service engineers establish a rapport and increase efficiency for both the lab and the company, he added.

Base Curve Appoints Papineau National Sales Director

SUN VALLEY, Calif.—Base Curve has announced the appointment of Mike Papineau to sales director of the Western Hemisphere.



Mike Papineau

“Mike's strong knowledge of the high-end segment of the market combined with his valuable relationships will be instrumental in successfully building Base Curve's brands,” said Steve Horowitz, executive vice president of Base Curve.

In his new position, Papineau will oversee the sales of both Carolina Herrera Eyewear and John Varvatos Eyewear in the U.S., Canada and Latin America.

Papineau's 14 years in the eyewear industry has included work as an account executive and national sales director, managing the U.S. sales effort of several eyewear providers. Most recently he served as the national sales director for Alain Mikli.

Briot USA Names Hemphill National Accounts Manager

CUMMING, Ga.—John Hemphill has joined Briot USA in the role of national accounts manager. Hemphill will be responsible for continuing to grow Briot's share in the optical retailer market. He will not only manage the needs of the chain store market in the area of customer support, he will focus on customizing the sales of finishing equipment to meet the requirements of various sized chains, according to Briot USA.

Hemphill brings more than 10 years of experience in the optical industry to Briot USA. Previously, he spent seven years as a territory sales manager for a finishing equipment company and several years in the wholesale lab market.

KBco Names Gaber as Mid-South Rep, Promotes Estes

CENTENNIAL, Colo.—KBco has named Scott Gaber as its sales representative in the Mid-South region. In his new role, Gaber will represent the company's line of polarized lens products in Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas,



Scott Gaber

New Mexico and Louisiana. An optical industry veteran of 13 years, Gaber started his company, Innovative Visual Products, in 2002.

“Scott's experience, commitment to customers and product knowledge will allow him to make a strong contribution to KBco and our customers alike,” said Kurt Hollinger, KBco's president. “We are pleased to have Scott representing us in the Mid-South.”

In a separate move, KBco recently promoted Deb Estes to customer service manager. Estes has been with KBco since 2005 and previously served as customer service supervisor.

Estes began her optical career as a dispensing optician. She later worked at Walman Optical in various positions for 24 years before joining KBco.

Illinois College of Optometry Elects Board of Trustees

CHICAGO—The Illinois College of Optometry (ICO) has elected its Board of Trustees members.

The following professionals have been elected officers: Richard S. Kattouf, OD, DOS, chairman of the board, Kattouf Consulting Services, Bonita Springs, Fla.; Michael V. Favia, secretary, from the law firm of Michael V. Favia and Associates, Chicago; and Millicent Knight, OD, treasurer, owner of North Shore Eye Center, Evanston, Ill. Favia and Knight will be serving their second term in these positions.

Additionally, the following professionals have been re-elected for 3-year terms: Chuck Quattrochi, CPA, of Raymond James Financial Services, La Grange, Ill.; Donovan Crouch, OD, owner of Vision Care Associates Storm Lake, Iowa; Robert Grazian, OD, owner of Santee Vision Care Center Optometry, Santee, Calif. was elected alumni trustee; and Stephen Pugh, of Pugh, Jones, Johnson & Quandt, PC., Chicago, Ill. was elected as a public trustee.

“We have a large responsibility to uphold,” said Richard S. Kattouf, OD. “The ICO Board of Trustees has established itself as an extraordinary group dedicated to better serving ICO and surrounding groups and we hope to uphold this legacy.”

“I think we have assembled a leadership council that will continue to lead ICO in the right direction,” said Arol Augsburg, OD, ICO president. ■■

11:00 AM Present to management, reflection free

1:00 PM Walk from the parking lot without squinting

2:00 PM Write a report on the computer, headache free

9:00 AM Play tennis with visual comfort

8:00 PM Drive at night, glare free

4:00 PM Respond to e-mails on handheld without distracting glare

6:00 PM Pick up kids from baseball, UV protected

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EVENING OF GLAMOUR

Stars, Designers, Industry Salute Accessories at Annual ACE Awards

NEW YORK—In the elegant atmosphere at Cipriani’s-42nd Street venue, close to 800 retail buyers and executives, accessories suppliers, fashion designers and celebrities turned out for the 11th annual ACE Awards Gala.

The Accessories Council Excellence (ACE) Awards are bestowed each November to the accessories’ industry’s most celebrated brands, journalists, designers, retailers and personalities. Honorees have made a significant impact on the way consumers shop, wear and think about accessories of all types—and sunwear is playing an increased role in this arena.

A growing number of sunwear companies are members of the Accessories Council.

This year’s ACE Awards sponsors included Lord & Taylor and Marchon Eyewear.

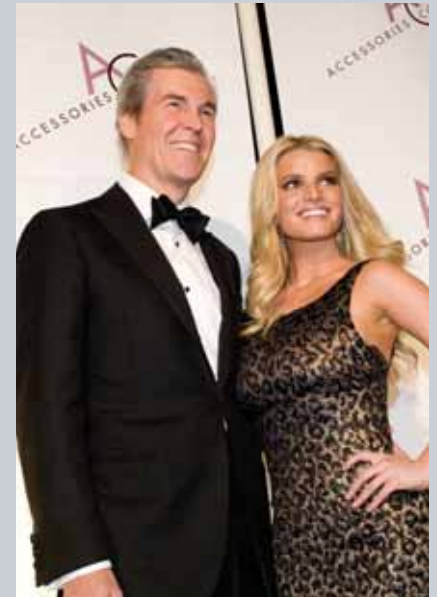
Other sunwear companies participate on the Council’s board of directors, including Sàfilo, Luxottica Group, Marchon and representatives of other fashion, media and accessories firms.

This year, the ACE recognized and honored: designer Tory Burch for Accessory Brand Launch; handbag designer Nancy Gonzales as Brand of the Year; fashion designer Marc Jacobs as Designer of the Year; model and “Project Runway” host Heidi Klum as Fashion Influencer; actress Mandy Moore as Fashion Innovator; Italian fashion designer Valentino received the Hall of Fame Award; *Harper’s Bazaar* was honored as Magazine of the Year; *Women’s Wear Daily’s* Bridget Foley was recognized with the Mary Lou Luther Award for Fashion, and Macy’s Inc. was honored with the ACE for Retailer of the Year.

—Marge Axelrad



The Judith Leiber-designed ACE Award.



Jessica Simpson presented an ACE to Federated/Macy’s CEO, Terry Lundren.



The stage was set at Cipriani’s-42nd Street in Manhattan.



Sàfilo USA’s Robin Ettinger, greets Godiva’s Ed Jankowski, also on the Council board.



Coach’s creative director, Reed Krakoff, with actress and ACE Fashion Innovator, Mandy Moore.



ACE honoree, designer Marc Jacobs, center, with Sàfilo’s Dick Russo, left, and Mark Ugenti, right.



Actress Kerry Washington with ACE honoree, designer Tory Burch.



Luxottica’s Vittorio Verdum, left, with colleagues Brian Rowe and Peter Guthy.



Marchon’s Lloyd Gittler and Mark Ginsberg.



Al and Gayle Berg of Marchon with the Accessories Council president, Karen Giberson.

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SCENE AND HEARD

GREECE GETAWAY

Winners of the "My Big Fat Greek Hoya Getaway" Tour Greece

LEWISVILLE, Texas—More than 120 travelers, including eyecare practitioners, distributors, Hoya representatives and guests, recently returned from a nine-day getaway to Greece, a vacation they earned by participating in the Hoya Vision Care, North America, "My Big Fat Greek Hoya Getaway" promotion.

Winners toured Athens' historic sites and several of Greece's beautiful islands, including Mykonos and Santorini.

Eyecare professionals who sold qualifying Hoyalux progressive lenses or qualifying Hoya anti-reflective coatings between February and May 2007 were eligible to enter and win the drawing for the Greek getaway.

The winning eyecare practices included: Brushy Creek Eye Care, Round Rock, Texas; Mt. View Eye Care, Mt. View, Ark.; Doctors Optical, Albuquerque, N.M.; Emery C. Huber, OD PA, Arlington, Texas; Bridgeport Eye Center, Bridgeport, Texas; Dr. Kenneth Lane, Lewisville, Texas; Total Optical/Total Eyecare, Duncanville, Texas; The Optical Shop, Tyler, Texas; Gallup Vision Source, Gallup, N.M.; Michigan Eye Institute, Flint, Mich.; Northwest Eye Physicians, Novi, Mich.; Drs. Van Lente & Leahy, Orland Park, Ill.; Family Eye Care, St. Charles, Ill.; Davis Eye Center, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio; Dr. James Kershaw, N. Olmsted, Ohio; Moberly Eye Center, Moberly, Mo.; James M. Ernst, OD, Alexandria, Ky.; Eye 1, Cincinnati, Ohio; Wilmer Vision Center, Baltimore, Md.; Clark Appler Opt, Towson, Md.; Dr. George Pegram, Chesapeake, Va.; Mid-City Opticians, N. Tonawanda, N.Y.; Professional Eye Associates, Mt. Pocono, Pa.; Optique Unique, Metuchen, N.J.; Eyes First, Middletown, N.J.; Dr. Colin Robinson, Windham, Maine; Castle Valley Eyecare, Castle Dale, Utah; Central Oregon Eyecare, Prineville, Ore.

The Sight Shop, Portland, Ore.; Tigard Optometric, Portland, Ore.; Suncoast Medical Clinic, St. Petersburg, Fla.; Ocala Eye Optical, Ocala, Fla.; Coughlin



Winners of Hoya's promotion toured Athens' historic sites and several of Greece's more picturesque islands, including Mykonos and Santorini.

Eye Center PC, Orlando, Fla.; Fashion Optique, Baton Rouge, La.; Total Vision Care, Clovis, Calif.; Family Eye Associates, Fairfield, Calif.; Dr. Joyce Kim, Sunnysvale, Calif.; Upland Optical Service, Upland, Calif.; Clinic for Vision PC, Albertville, Ala.

Winning distributors included: Pech Optical, Sioux City, Iowa; Westside Optical, Bono, Ark.; Opti-Matrix, Huntsville, Ala.; Walman Optical, Minneapolis, Minn.; Harbor Optical, Traverse City, Mich.

GIVING BACK

Davis Vision Does Community Outreach With New York Islanders, Jets Teams



Davis Vision's Laura Dyer (second from l) and Amy Stack (r), assistant director, executive office and community relations, help wives of New York Jets football players serve early Thanksgiving dinners to needy people under the auspices of the Interfaith Nutrition Network.

A question and answer session preceded an autograph signing session for students.

Said Joseph Carlomusto, Davis Vision president and chief executive officer, "This was a terrific day since it provided an opportunity to have role models read to students, and hopefully excite them to pick up a book and read on their own independently. As a school-wide event, it unites us and focuses on literacy."

Shortly before Thanksgiving, the company conducted another community outreach program, joining forces with more than 15 members of the New York Jets Women's Organization to bring an early Thanksgiving meal to 400 people in need. The meal program was sponsored by Long Island's Interfaith Nutrition Network (INN).

PLAINVIEW, N.Y.—To emphasize the importance of good vision to children's development, especially reading, Davis Vision recently partnered with the New York Islanders hockey team and Sharp for a "Literary Day" in a dozen elementary schools across New York's Nassau and Suffolk counties.

For the event, Islanders team members spoke to students at the schools and took part in the second annual Literacy Day activities before their afternoon practice.



At the Literary Day event (l to r), New York Islander player Trent Hunter; Miriam Hannan, principal of Norman J. Levy Lakeside School in Merrick, N.Y.; Laura Dyer, Davis Vision's assistant vice president, strategic events and community relations; Islander Sean Bergenheim; and Peri Hoffer-Hinden, president of the school's PTA.

HONOR ROLL

ClearVision Prepares Kids for Tomorrow

HAUPPAUGE, N.Y.—At a celebratory luncheon that took place on Nov. 15, the Long Island Works Coalition recognized ClearVision Optical as a member of their "Honor Roll" for their commitment to helping the organization "Prepare Today's Students for Tomorrow's Workforce."

The Long Island Works Coalition is a comprehensive Long Island-based organization which forges collaborative working relationships between employers and the educational community. It is an inclusive coalition that brings together business people, government officials, educators on all levels, parents and students and is aimed exclusively at the educational development and training of Long Island's student population in order to produce a workforce that has the skills that businesses need and value.

More than 600 representatives from Long Island's business, education and civic communities attended the annual luncheon event to recognize the Coalition's efforts.

To show further support for this organization, ClearVision sponsored the event's entertainment, provided by the Wantagh High School Jazz Ensemble.

Long Island Works sponsors include Adelphi University, Dowling College, Keyspan, Long Island Association, Motorola, Inc., Newsday, OSI Pharmaceuticals, Inc. and Suffolk County.



The Wantagh High School Jazz Ensemble, sponsored by ClearVision, provided entertainment for the Long Island Works Coalition luncheon where ClearVision was honored.

OPTICIANRY NEWS

Ophthalmologists Honored at Annual AAO Meeting

NEW ORLEANS—Several ophthalmologists were honored with professional awards during last month's annual American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) meeting here.

The AAO's highest honor, the 2007 Laureate Recognition Award, went to Claes H. Dohlman, MD, for his distinguished career and contributions to ophthalmology. In addition, a new Harvard Medical School professorship named in his honor was announced at a special reception for Dohlman in conjunction with the meeting. Dohlman is a former chairman of Harvard's department of ophthalmology, chief of ophthalmology

at the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary and director of the Howe Laboratory of Ophthalmology at Harvard.

The AAO Outstanding Humanitarian Service Award was presented to Alessandro Pezzola, MD, and Paul G. Steinkuller, MD, for their participation in charitable activities, indigent care, community service and other humanitarian activities.

Since 1987, Pezzola has been volunteering his services to organize, raise funds for and build several rural hospitals dedicated to eye surgery for disadvantaged, indigent people living in developing countries, including Zaire, the Ivory

Coast and Ghana. He is currently working on a project in Indonesia and Mali.

Almost half of the more than 25 years Steinkuller has practiced in pediatric ophthalmology were spent caring for the underserved and underprivileged in Africa, including six years with the Christian Blind Mission, an international Christian medical organization. After returning from Africa, he re-joined the faculty at the Baylor College of Medicine Department of Ophthalmology, training residents and fellows in pediatric ophthalmology.

Also at the meeting the AAO presented its Lifetime Achievement

Honor Award to 12 ophthalmologists for their contributions to the Academy and the profession.

Honored were Frederick L. Ferris III, MD, Bethesda, Md.; C. Stephen Foster, MD, Cambridge, Mass.; Jack T. Holladay, MD, Bellaire, Texas; B. Thomas Hutchinson, MD, Boston; Manus C. Kraff, MD, Chicago; Richard L. Lindstrom, MD, Bloomington, Minn.; Travis A. Meredith, MD, Chapel Hill, N.C.; Marilyn T. Miller, MD, Chicago; Richard P. Mills, MD, Seattle; Donald S. Minckler, MD, Irvine, Calif.; Robert Ritch, MD, New York City; and M. Bruce Shields, MD, New Haven, Conn. ■

EYECARE NEWS

VSP FUNDS AOA'S INFANTSEE ADS, GETS CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARDS

RANCHO CORDOVA, Calif.—Vision Service Plan (VSP) recently provided a grant to InfantSEE, the infants' vision public-health program of the American Optometric Association (AOA). The funding was used to support advertising for the program.

The company also recently received the World Class Customer Satisfaction Award from Service Quality Measurement Group (SQMG) for the sixth consecutive year.

VSP's grant to the InfantSEE program provided funds for print ad placements in the July, September and November issues of *Parents* magazine as well as banner advertising on www.babyzone.com.

"The number of InfantSEE assessments has increased since the paid advertising campaign was implemented. We are thrilled with the results, and appreciate VSP's assistance in elevating the public's awareness of InfantSEE on a national level," said Debra Fox, program director for InfantSEE.

The program, developed by the AOA in partnership with The Vision Care Institute of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, is designed to provide free professional eyecare for infants nationwide, regardless of family income. More than 7,600 AOA member ODs have enrolled as InfantSEE providers, according to the association; so far an estimated 125,000 to 150,000 babies have had their eye health and vision assessed.

In addition to the SQMG's World Class Customer Satisfaction Award, VSP also received SQMG customer service awards for "Highest Customer Satisfaction in the Insurance Industry" for the fourth consecutive year; "Call Center World Class Call Certification" for the second consecutive year (as one of only 3 percent of the companies evaluated to receive this award); and "Highest Employee Satisfaction in the Insurance Industry" for the fourth consecutive year.

"These are terrific accomplishments given that, in the past two years, we have added over 200 new agents into our call centers," said Laura Costa, VSP's vice president of customer service. "We also had our live call volume increase by 20 percent in 2007."

AMERICAN ACADEMY OF OPHTHALMOLOGY LAUNCHES NEWS/EDUCATION NETWORK

NEW ORLEANS—The American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) unveiled the Ophthalmic News and Education (O.N.E.) Network at the AAO annual meeting here last month. The O.N.E. Network is designed to offer clinical, educational and news resources to practitioners, according to the organization.

"The O.N.E. Network is the result of an extraordinary Web development effort by the Academy and ophthalmic subspecialty societies to support ophthalmologists in their professional practice," said H. Dunbar Hoskins, Jr., MD, the AAO's executive vice president.

Highlights of the network, which is free to Academy members, include a customiz-

able home page to meet members' specific subspecialty needs; subspecialty-specific newsletters, clinical updates and news; online self-assessments, with an automated remediation tool; and study tools to help members with the Maintenance of Certification process.

ALCON, PREVENT BLINDNESS PARTNER FOR EYE SCREENINGS AT AARP ANNUAL MEETING

BOSTON—At the 2007 American Association of Retired Persons' (AARP) recent annual meeting here, Alcon joined with Prevent Blindness America (PBA) to educate Baby Boomers about practical approaches to maintaining healthy eyes and good vision. Alcon and Prevent Blindness America facilitated more than 400 complimentary eye screenings at the meeting. Alcon also sponsored several informational presentations about glaucoma, cataracts and dry eye.

In addition, Alcon and PBA encouraged meeting attendees to speak with onsite eyecare practitioners about eye health concerns and offered educational literature and product samples.

OPHTHONIX OFFERS OD GRANT THROUGH CLEINMAN

SAN DIEGO—Ophthonix, Inc., a company that specializes in marketing advanced vision correction, has been named a premier sponsor of Cleinman Performance Network (CPN), a division of Cleinman Performance Partners.


Ophthonix has partnered with Cleinman Performance Partners to offer the "High Definition Meets High Performance" grant program, which is designed to provide qualifying Ophthonix practices with access to Cleinman Performance Partners' proprietary business development processes.

"Ophthonix is committed to supporting the Cleinman Performance Network with professional education and business development opportunities," said Stephen J. Osbaldeston, CEO of Ophthonix. "Our companies have had a strong partnership for several years now, and we're looking forward to continued success with the 'High Definition Meets High Performance' grant program."

As part of the CPN membership, facilitated groups meet to exchange knowledge and develop new ideas about strategic, management and optometric financial issues pertaining to their practices. These meetings provide optometrists and owners of optometric practices with an opportunity to learn from management and technology leaders, an announcement said. Ophthonix and Cleinman Performance Network will hold three "High Definition Meets High Performance" meetings in the fall. Those interested in applying for the grant should contact Rosemary Chee at Ophthonix, (858) 869-2193. ■

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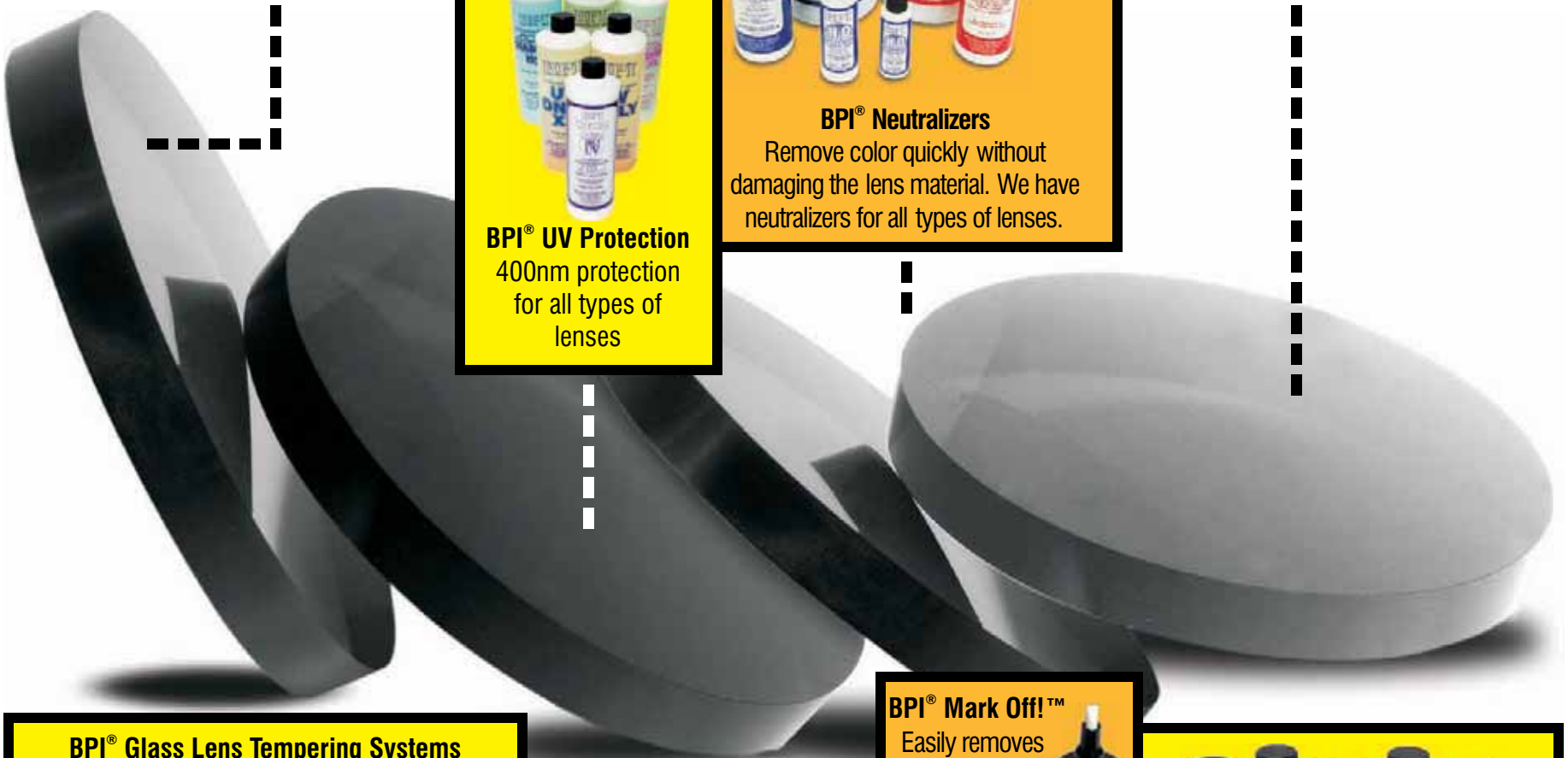
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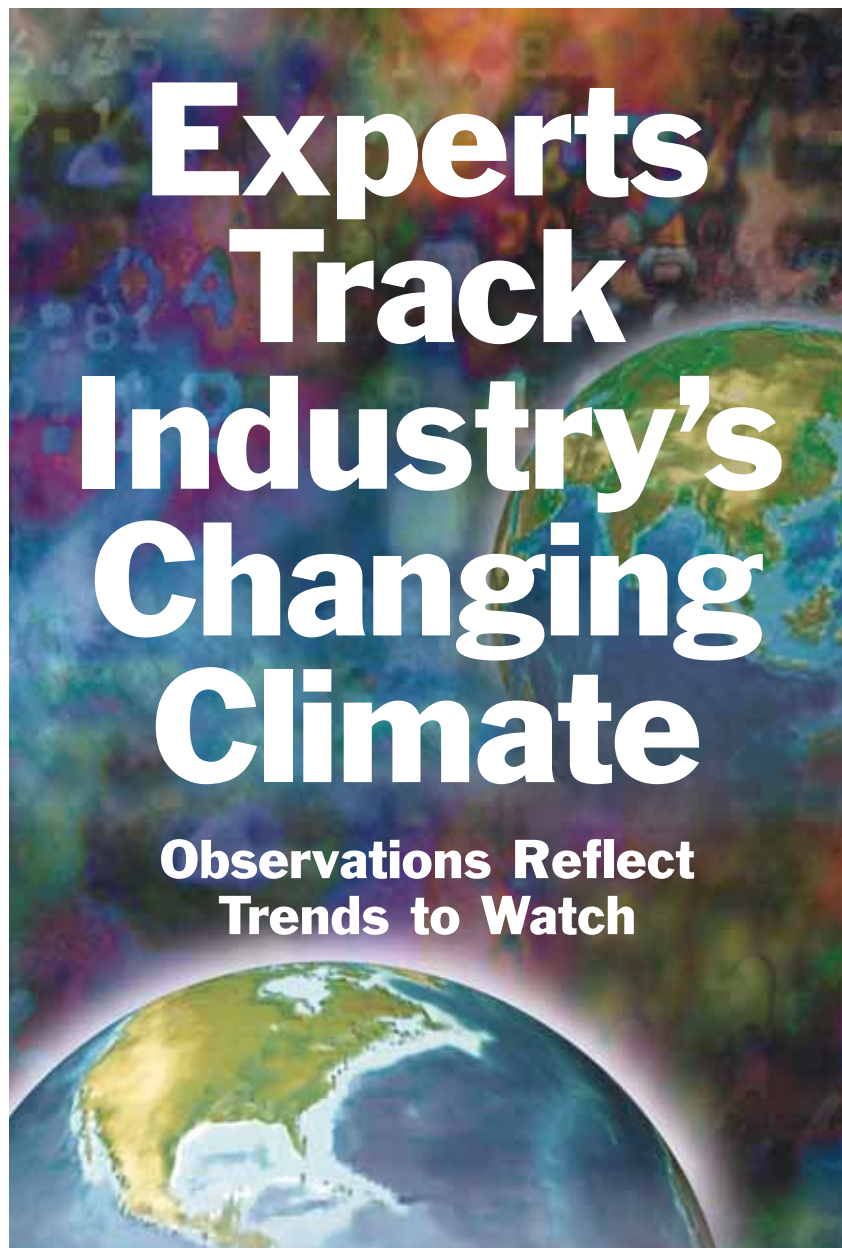
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NEW YORK—2007 marked a pivotal year for the eyewear and eyecare industry.

Technology gained a major foothold in practices' exam rooms and in the processing of both buying methods and products. Brands continued to transform eyewear fashion. Consolidation proceeded. "Wellness" became a new term of opportunity for eyecare.

Over the course of the past 12 months, **Vision Monday** marked its 20th anniversary milestone with a series of special "Celebrating Leadership" reports, featuring insights, predictions and opinions from dozens of industry observers about the issues and trends that have marked two decades of change—and point the way toward the future.



VM's editorial team went beyond the news headlines to develop the series.

For this issue, we chose just a few of these comments as a way of underlining key issues for all eyecare professionals and optical retailers, laboratories and distributors to consider as they plan for the new year.

All of these special reports, some of them Cover Stories, are posted on VM's new Web site, www.visionmonday.com.

Each reveals thought-provoking ideas, astute commentary and analysis that point the way to 2008 and beyond.

—Marge Axelrad
and the Vision Monday staff

"Computer technology has expanded so much in recent years that we can now do things that we never dreamed we'd be able to do. With computerized data, you can focus your inventory where it's most efficiently deployed, so you have more picks when orders come in. On the one side of the business, computers have changed customer service and order processing. On the other side, computers have had a tremendous impact on the products we can make available."

Ben Lynch
President/Owner
Winchester Optical Company
Elmira, N.Y.
"Technology Transformation"
Vision Monday, Nov. 19, 2007

"We see a definite linkage between regular, comprehensive eye exams and disease diagnosis and management. And we've found that consumers with vision coverage are more likely to seek

out care—our research indicates that half of all people with a vision plan get an eye exam, versus the one in three people with medical insurance who gets a physical."

Rob Lynch
Chief Executive Officer and President
Vision Service Plan
Rancho Cordova, Calif.
"For the Record: 20 Trends in 20 Years"
Vision Monday, Jan. 22, 2007

"Managed care is the 800-pound gorilla, driving patient behavior so profoundly it frightens me. Patients have a great amount of anxiety over going out of their plan for anything, be it a red eye or a broken frame—I regularly see patients go without treatment or glasses until the insurance kicks in again. However, managed care ensures that my patients return year after year, and drives new patients to my practice. I doubt we could survive without it."

Sandra Bury, OD
Complete Vision Care
Oak Lawn, Ill.
"Mapping the New Landscape: ECP's Evolving Role"
Vision Monday, June 18, 2007

"We used to design in a silo, we were designing in a bubble. It was all about the eyewear and we were designing beautiful eyewear that hopefully integrated back to the brand. Now we design in a collaborative, branded team that is driven by the licensor because now there is a lifestyle approach which wasn't part of the process years ago. In the past, a big apparel manufacturer was either known for furs or coats or ready-to-wear, now everybody wants to be a lifestyle. The synergy, the expectation now that they have is that we should all be speaking from the same platform, that we should have the same vocabulary. That's pushing us to come up with what needs to be done."

Mark Ginsberg
Senior Vice President for designer brands
Marchon Eyewear
"Brands Transform Eyewear Design"
Vision Monday, Sept. 10, 2007

"The perception of online sales has shifted in recent years. It's far more accepted now, both by the public and the industry. The explosive growth in broadband technology and the availability of high-speed access in most homes has helped fuel the explosion. The 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. model no longer suffices; users may want an answer or to find a product late Saturday evening—and they expect the answer to be on the Web, from the convenience of home or office."

David Cooper, OD
Co-founder and CEO
FramesDirect.com
"Mapping the New Landscape: E-Tailing in Optical, What's Next?"
Vision Monday, June 18, 2007

"The entry of the mass merchants into optical has led to greater segmentation within the industry—before they came along, the bulk of eyewear sales came in the mid-price range. Now optical retailers are carving out different niches, from high-end to budget, and consumers are finding their natural places in the market."

Reade Fahs

Chief Executive Officer and President
National Vision

Lawrenceville, Ga.

"For the Record : 20 Trends in 20 Years"
Vision Monday, Jan. 22, 2007

"I think optical may be a little more welcoming to women than retailing—and business—in general because of the connection with people, which women are innately good at. Our industry helps people see—that's pretty amazing, and a very personal thing...and women get that."

Lynn Millay

Senior Director, Lens Management
Luxottica Retail

Mason, Ohio

"VM's 20 Most Influential Women in Optical 2007"

Vision Monday, July 23, 2007

"[It's] the lab's mission to try to teach practitioners how to move upstream. It's not an easy sell. The percentage of customers who 'get it' is still not extremely high. It's a great feeling when a long term customer 'gets it' because then, they are wide open, they want to know everything, they are like a sponge knowing they are going to be able to compete better in their own market."

Ralph Woythaler

President and CEO
21st Century Optics

Long Island City, N.Y.

"Technology Transformation"

Vision Monday, Nov. 19, 2007

"Digital Surfacing is what AR was 5 to 10 years ago. For an independent lab to remain competitive in their market they needed to invest in lab AR. The same thinking may be true about digital surfacing today. They should be watching the growth of digitally surfaced lenses and looking to possibly invest within the next 2 to 5 years, because in some cases it may take up to a year to get the equipment."

Mike Sutton

General Manager

Rite-Style Optical

Omaha, Nebr.

"Wholesalers Size Up the Labscape"

Vision Monday, Oct. 22, 2007

"Patients are paying more than they ever have for a pair of eyeglasses and they should understand why and how new lens technology helps them achieve the best vision. Also, instead of offering AR coating as an 'add-on' or a 'treatment,' ECPs should be presenting AR as an integral component of the lens that offers better vision for their patients."

Greg Blackwell

Pinnacle Optical,
Birmingham, Ala.

"Wholesalers Size Up the Labscape"

Vision Monday, Oct. 22, 2007

"From '60s to 60:

Our failure to connect concerns about health with the importance of vision care is one of the great challenges we face. Telling the best story about vision care and building the value of vision is at a critical time as two trends—the aging of America and the shift to micro marketing—are intersecting to create the largest vision care market in history."

Tim Fortner

Trade Development Manager,
Transitions Optical

"Promoting Wellness: Eye Care's Next Big Challenge"

Vision Monday, June 18, 2007

"The choice of lenses has exploded.

Back in the '80s, there were one or two progressives, the majority of patients wore bifocals and the AR coating scratched. Today, there are 24 lens choices for everyone who walks in. Your optical staff has to be constantly trained, and you have to stay on top of those changes too. Patients want and expect a higher level of expertise from the private practice OD."

Jack Schaeffer, OD

President
Schaeffer Eye Center
Birmingham, Ala.

"For the Record : 20 Trends in 20 Years"

Vision Monday, Jan. 22, 2007

"Computer-related vision issues are also an arena affecting older patients. We live in an Intermediate World. When you consider computers, both desktop and laptop, PDAs and cell-phones, the fact that over 100 million people recently reported spending an average of 50 percent of their days in front of a computer screen, and that 70 percent of the population are daily computer users, there's a huge impact to messages about vision care."

Jon Torrey

Vice President/Prio/Computer Vision
Essilor of America

"Promoting Wellness:
Eye Care's Next Big Challenge"

Vision Monday, June 18, 2007

"Managed vision care has evolved from 2 percent of my practice in 1971 to 60 percent today. How financially rewarding it is is all in the way you manage the plans and the resulting patients. The problem is, most ODs join plans as a

'knee-jerk' reaction, and never read the contracts or calculate a plan's costs and benefits. My advice is to calculate your chair cost, take time to read the contract and make a 'business decision' before signing."

Randy Fincher, OD

Private Practitioner
Colorado

"Mapping the New Landscape: ECP's Evolving Role"

Vision Monday, June 18, 2007

"My practice has seen a large shift from seeing patients for annual 'routine' eye examinations to more problem-focused exams. Every day I prescribe medications, discuss systemic diseases with patients and interact with the larger medical community by co-managing and referring/consulting with other specialists to provide optimum care."

Kristine Eng, OD

Orinda Optometry Group
Orinda, Calif.

"Mapping the New Landscape: ECP's Evolving Role"

Vision Monday, June 18, 2007

"Gone are the days when people viewed their glasses as just something you had to have. Men especially come in with the idea that they are updating their wardrobe. I find men are taking a much more active role in selecting eyewear, and are mostly excited about what they have ordered. Over the years, they have become much more fashion conscious about their eyewear. They have always been a big part of sunwear sales, but it was because of activities they participated in—fishing, golf, etc. Men still have those same needs, but they expect their glasses to be fashionable and trendy as well."

Betsey Nelson

Optician
Warren Eye Care
Racine, Wis.

"Modern Man: Eyewear Comes of Age for Today's Multi-Dimensional Man"

Vision Monday, Feb. 19, 2007

"In today's highly competitive eyewear/eyecare environment, a leader needs a brave face and a lot of creative innovation. The changes in all facets of this industry are so dynamic today that to keep pace with the altered business landscape one must lead with boldness and courage. A good leader needs to adapt to those ongoing changes and innovate to keep his or her business on the right track for success. That means doing the proper research into current business conditions, then taking risks, experimenting with new ideas and merchandising trends, and keeping up with the times—to try to lead in the times."

Lance Snarr

CEO
Thoma & Sutton Eye Care Professionals
Cincinnati, Ohio

"Setting the Tempo for Success"

Vision Monday, March 19, 2007

"There's a huge opportunity for companies willing to create dialogue and engage 'e-fluential' people [on the Internet]. There is mushrooming consumer interest in getting information about eyecare and eyewear products via the Internet."

Erin Byrne

Global Chief Digital Strategist
Burson-Marsteller

"Vision Monday's First Global Leadership Summit"

Vision Monday, April 16, 2007



Tiffany Partners With Luxottica for Jewelry-Inspired Eyewear

By Deirdre Carroll
Associate Editor

NEW YORK, N.Y.—Luxottica Group S.p.A. has unveiled the brand new Tiffany Eyewear collection from Tiffany & Co. featuring optical and sunglass styles inspired by Tiffany's diamond and silver designs.

"Tiffany was really a great opportunity to do some fantastic work and within our portfolio it fits perfectly," said Antonio Miyakawa, executive vice president of Luxottica. "First, it is very American and

in America it is a super powerful brand. It is also very strong in the Asian markets and in select countries around the world but everywhere else it is getting stronger and growing. So it is a great opportunity for a company, like us, that is so strong in distribution in the U.S. and Asia but can also offer a fantastic partnership for Tiffany in other parts of the world."

"Tiffany is very guarded of our brand," said Jon King, executive vice president of Tiffany & Co. "We protect the image strongly but at the same time we know the Tiffany woman. We know

"Tiffany was really a great opportunity to do some fantastic work and within our portfolio it fits perfectly."
—Antonio Miyakawa, Luxottica



who she is and what her style is, so it only makes sense that knowing that eyewear is an important part of her life and knowing that in partnership with Luxottica we could offer her that and still stay true to the brand we felt confident that we could launch this collection. Of course, the other aspect is that jewelry, and the icons of Tiffany, translate so easily to eyewear."

Tiffany, famous for their diamonds and colorful gems, have created with Luxottica an eyewear collection featuring their exclusive diamond designs hand set in sparkling crystal; Tiffany Jazz, as fluid as the art form; Tiffany Lace, an incandescent sunburst; Tiffany

Voile, a geometric design; Tiffany Swing, sheer dazzle in the round; and Tiffany Bubbles all in a row. More of the jeweler's icons are featured in sterling silver, including Return to Tiffany inscribed on sterling medallions; the T&CO logo; the Tiffany 1837 emblem featuring the jeweler's founding year; and the Tiffany Atlas, a signature of chic urban hardware.

Frame silhouettes run the gamut from bold and dramatic to narrow and sleek, rimless and wrap, and in colors such as glossy black, silver and gold, tortoise, deep red, burgundy and chocolate, translucent yellow and pink, white and ivory, gunmetal and marbled hues.

The initial Tiffany launch styles released by Luxottica are priced to the dispenser from \$170 to \$460. ■■



SECOND LOOK

Giorgio Armani Sun Goes Sporty

PADOVA, Italy—Sàfilo, in collaboration with Carrera's R&D department, presents Giorgio Armani's latest men's sunglasses collection to please consumers who prefer a sport feel and cutting-edge technology, but also enjoy the pleasure of Armani design and attention to detail.

These four new wrap sunglasses feature a streamlined silhouette with distinctive hi-tech design content which makes them sturdy, light and flexible due to their Grimaldi construction paired with soft Megol pads set inside temples.

The GA 514/S is a rounded wrap while the GA 515/S is a tougher looking design with a close-fitting sun mask featuring interchangeable lenses unrimmed on the lower edge for easy removal. A Giorgio Armani metal logo on the temples adds a finishing touch to the strong color options available while spare lenses come with model GA 515/S.

Additional styles include the state-of-the-art styling of the rounded mask, GA 571/S, and the close-fitting, rectangular GA 572/S, both featuring a new lens from Sàfilo with a strong wrap curve, mimicking the mask look. These models are personalized with the Giorgio Armani logo on the left temple and come in semi-matte black with mauve lenses, gold with brown-flash lenses, gloss black with mirror-silver lenses and dove-grey with dark brown lenses.

These sunglasses are priced to the dispenser between \$110 and \$135. ■■



Model GA571/S
from Giorgio
Armani for Sàfilo.

SECOND LOOK

Eastern States Introduces Crystals to the Diva Collection

ELMONT, N.Y.—Eastern States Eyewear has announced the release of five new styles in its Diva Eyewear Collection featuring the use of multi-colored Swarovski Crystals for the mature lady who desires a slightly more ornate frame.

"Adding multi-colored stones to our Diva Collection has really been a natural evolution," said Paul Shyer, president of Eastern States. "The market's desire for interesting, eye catching color has continually grown in recent years. We are excited about how our Diva Collection has interpreted this trend."

Elegantly designed, each model is both enhanced and complimented with the addition of the colored stones. With a variety of tones offered in each frame such as rose/lavender, brown/topaz, black/blue, black/mint pearl, and navy/purple, the stones are meticulously matched to each color.

Diva's new ophthalmic collection is priced to the dispenser from \$109 to \$119. ■■



Style D5259 from the
Diva collection by Eastern
States Eyewear.



WILEY X EYEWEAR® WINS A MAJOR COURT VICTORY OVER PANOPTX®, INC.

FEDERAL JUDGE INVALIDATES EVERY CLAIM OF PANOPTX®, INC.'S PATENT

Wiley X Eyewear®, industry leader in protective eyewear products, has won a decisive court victory in a patent infringement suit brought against it by Panoptx®, Inc. In its lawsuit, filed December 12, 2006, Panoptx alleged that certain Wiley X Eyewear products infringe Panoptx's U.S. Patent No. 7,083,276 (the "276 Patent"). Wiley X Eyewear denied the allegations and filed counterclaims against Panoptx, seeking a declaration that the '276 Patent is not infringed and is invalid. On November 9, the Court ruled in Wiley X Eyewear's favor on its counterclaim for patent invalidity.

In short, the Court agreed with Wiley X Eyewear and found that Panoptx's patent is invalid and should not have been issued.

To obtain this favorable ruling, Wiley X Eyewear had to overcome the presumption of validity that all patents enjoy, and to provide the Court with "clear and convincing evidence" that Panoptx's '276 Patent claims are invalid. The Court granted Wiley X Eyewear's motion for partial summary judgment, finding as a matter of law that every one of the 22 claims stated in Panoptx's '276 Patent is invalid.

Wiley X Eyewear's win comes just three months after Panoptx admitted, in connection with a separate lawsuit, that it was infringing Wiley X Eyewear's '688 Patent, and that the '688 Patent is valid.

Both these court decisions are a major vindication for Wiley X, whose cutting-edge technology provides critical eye protection for outdoor enthusiasts as well as the FBI, DEA, Army Rangers, Navy SEALs and other elite Special Forces Units. "There was never any doubt in our minds that we acted properly in opposing this suit and that the '276 Patent was not a valid patent," said Dan Freeman, Vice-President of Wiley X Eyewear. "We are very pleased that the Court found so strongly in our favor."

With 20 years of innovation in providing advanced eyewear solutions to the military and commercial markets, Wiley X is looking forward to continue its tradition of providing customers with top quality eyewear. The company's High Velocity Protection (HVP™) eyewear is manufactured with shatterproof, distortion-free Selenite™ polycarbonate lenses, meeting ANSI Z87.1-2003 high-velocity impact standards, in 14 lens tints to provide eye comfort and protection in any environment. These lenses are matched with a variety of high-performance, virtually unbreakable TR90 frames, available in a wide range of styles and attractive colors.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT WILEY X PRODUCTS OR TO GET COMPLETE DETAILS ON THIS RULING,
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SECOND LOOK

Modo Introduces the Colorful Linea Collection

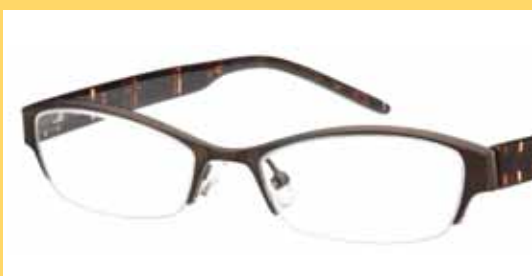
NEW YORK—Modo has launched Linea, a new sub-collection drawing inspiration from design and color. Linea also introduces a new technical innovation, a spring hinge seamlessly integrated in the temples.

The Modo Linea collection consists of 16 new styles, available in titanium, acetate and titanium/acetate combinations, all hand made by Japanese artisans under the highest quality standards.

The acetates feature exclusive new colors, developed especially for the collection. Colors are vibrant and textured and range from red/lilac, red/black and black/transparent combinations to more classic browns and grays. The flexible hinge is seamlessly integrated in the temple, making the mechanism lean and stable, while at the same time making the frames comfortable and adaptable to many different faces.

The titanium styles offer a choice of beta-titanium or acetate temples. Colors are elegant and expressive, and feature contrasting fronts and temples, from gunmetal/red and brown/forest green to brushed silver/black and red/lilac. As with the acetates, the innovative spring hinge is lean and stable, and its mechanism almost invisible. In the combination frames, classic-inspired titanium fronts are matched to bold textured acetates, from red to blue adding character.

The Modo Linea collection is priced to the dispenser from \$65 to \$89. ■■



The titanium/acetate combination style 4000 from Modó's Linea collection.



Acetate style 5004 in red and lilac from Modó's new Linea sub-collection.

SECOND LOOK

Visionetic Offers Two Mirror Kits

ORLANDO, Fla.—Visionetic, a new coating lab based here, is expanding its offering to include four-place and nine-place mirror kits.

Visionetic's mirror coatings are created from advanced thin film applications, according to Calvin Howell, sales and marketing director for the lab, who is pictured here holding the two kits. The mirrors are applied under strict vacuum chamber conditions and are coated utilizing a special control program that ensures color consistency. The mirror coating operation features a variety of colors and intensity, from flash to standard to high-reflective. All mirrors come standard with hydrophobic overcoats to seal in the mirror treatment. ■■



SUN ADVISOR

Boomers' Vision Needs Still Drive Demand for Sunwear

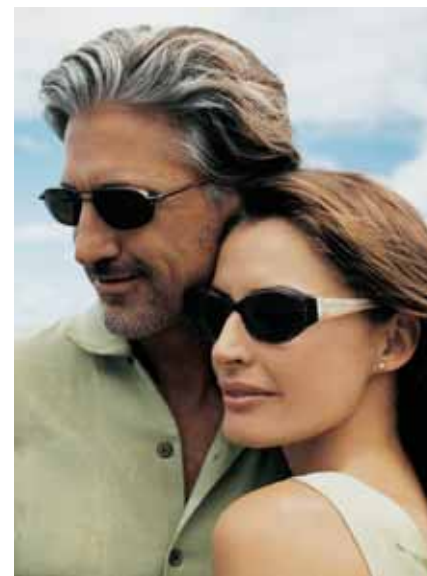
SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif.—With all the focus placed on the growing eyewear needs of the Gen Y, Millennials or Echo Boomers over the last few years, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that maturing Baby Boomers are a market segment that can still create a significant impact on the sunwear retail environment.

As Baby Boomers age, their demand for glasses and specialized eye services continues to increase. The highest percentages of eyeglass wearers are over 50 years of age. In fact, according to the Vision Council of America (VCA), more than 75 percent of people aged 65 and older wear prescription eyewear.

Shorter buying cycles are also contributing to their increasing visioncare needs. People used to replace their glasses every three to five years. Now, it's every one to two years and 42 percent of Americans who wear glasses now purchase a new pair every two years according to the VCA. In fact, the VCA stated that 37 million American adults say they are very likely or extremely likely to purchase eyeglasses in the next six months.

"Marketers are slowly waking up," said Matt Thornhill, president of the Boomer Project, a Richmond, Va. consulting firm. "If you're going to expand your business, you will have to market to the aging boomer."

But approximately only 10 percent of these people purchase prescription sunglasses or photochromic prescription eyewear and another five percent buy clip-on sunglasses, leaving a full 85 percent of prescription eyeglass wearing Americans without effective UV and glare protection.



It is that 85 percent that companies, like Live Eyewear, who produce sunglasses meant to be worn over prescription eyewear are targeting. Live Eyewear makes special polarized sunglasses that can be worn over prescription eyewear. Their leading brand among the eyecare community is Cocoon, a collection of six patented sunglasses that fit over 99 percent of all prescription eyewear, according to the company.

"Over the past five years, eyecare professionals have increased the number of Cocoon they dispense by more than 500 percent," said Kieran Hardy, president of Live Eyewear.

"More and more people are becoming aware of the convenience and performance of Cocoon." ■■



The Cocoon Stream Line tortoise frames with amber lenses from Live Eyewear.

SUN Advisor
A VisionMonday Newsletter

Don't forget to check out Vision Monday's Sun Advisor E-Newsletter each month. In the December edition, see why all that glitters really is gold this holiday season in Trend Flash, why cases are where it's at for women and children alike in Accessory Watch and what hot shades the celebrities are wearing in Star Sightings. To view the December issue and all previous issues go to www.visionmonday.com and click on the Sun Advisor icon.



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CONTACT LENSES

Independent ECP's Retail Soft CL Prices Stable in 2007: ABB/Con-Cise Monitor

CORAL SPRINGS, Fla.—Just-released data revealed that the average soft lens price per box charged by independent ECPs was unchanged during 2007. Among the major soft contact lens categories, clear sphere and colors pricing was unchanged compared to 2006, as soft toric pricing declined 1 percent and multi-focal pricing increased 1 percent.

These pricing averages are derived from the ABB/Con-Cise “Soft Lens Retail Price Monitor,” a quarterly audit of ECP pricing of more than 30 leading soft contact lens brands. Included in the analysis are prices for 27 brands that were continuously monitored over the past eight quarters.

Average per box retail price of independents for the 27 brands was \$43.92 in 2007, compared to \$43.99 in 2006, an insignificant decline of just 0.2 percent the recent Monitor reports.

In a separate analysis of retail pricing trends of Wal-Mart and 1-800-Contacts, ABB/Con-Cise reports that Wal-Mart's retail pricing for 22 brands monitored

during both years, was unchanged in the fourth quarter, 2007 versus the prior year, while 1-800-Contacts' prices were up 6 percent. During the fourth quarter of 2007, Wal-Mart's average price per box was 23 percent less than that charged by independent ECPs, while 1-800-Contacts' prices averaged 11 percent less than independents.

“Disciplined management of retail pricing is an opportunity for independent ECPs to improve soft lens profit margins,” said Angel Alvarez, ABB/Con-Cise's CEO.

“Market analyses show that typical independents earn a 45 percent gross profit margin from soft lenses. Through competitive price monitoring and adoption of a consistent margin strategy, ECPs are able to raise the profit margin to 48 percent with no loss in business. For an average size practice that translates to a \$5,000 to \$6,000 profit improvement,” said Alvarez.

A copy of the Fourth Quarter Soft Lens Retail Price Monitor is available this month from ABB/Con-Cise sales representatives.

ABB/Con-Cise is the largest soft lens distributor in the U.S., serving over 15,000 independent ECPs throughout the nation. ■

Vistakon-Sponsored Study Indicates Kids, Teens Prefer Contact Lenses Over Glasses

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.—A new study of attitudes about contact lenses among children and teenagers, sponsored by the Vistakon division of Johnson & Johnson Vision Care (NYSE: JNJ), indicates that CL wear “significantly improves how children and teenagers feel about their appearance and participation in activities” compared to eyeglasses, according to the company.

The three-month study involved children aged 8 to 12 and teenagers aged 13 to 17 who require vision correction to see optimally; participants were fitted with Vistakon's Acuvue silicone hydrogel contact lenses. The study was conduct-

Independent ECP Soft Lens Retail Pricing 2007 vs. 2006

	Average Retail Price/Box		
	2006	2007	% Change
Clear Spheres (13)	\$36.20	\$36.19	NC
Torics (6)	\$53.61	\$53.12	-0.9%
Colors (4)	\$40.89	\$40.72	-0.4%
Multifocals (4)	\$58.02	\$58.46	+0.8%
Total Soft Lenses (27)	\$43.99	\$43.92	-0.2%

Source: ABB Retail Price Monitor. Includes only best-selling products monitored during each quarter during 2006 and 2007. Unweighted average price per box.

Independent ECP Soft Lens Retail Pricing vs. Wal-Mart and 1-800 Contacts: 4Q (unweighted average price per box of 22 leading brands)

	4Q 2006	4Q 2007	% Change
Independent ECP	\$41.89	\$41.79	-0.2%
Wal-Mart	\$32.52	\$32.38	-0.4%
% less than independent ECP	-22.4%	-22.5%	
1-800-CONTACTS	\$35.06	\$37.04	+5.6%
% less than independent ECP	-16.3%	-11.4%	

Source: ABB Retail Price Monitor 4Q 2007

ed at the Ohio State University College of Optometry, the New England College of Optometry and the University of Houston College of Optometry.

When asked which they liked better (or equally), 71.2 percent of the children and 78.5 percent of the teens said they liked wearing contact lenses “a little better” or “a lot better” than glasses. In addition, 95.9 percent of the children and 92.6 percent of the teens said they “loved” or “liked” to wear contact lenses during sports, while 58.9 percent of the children and 62 percent of the teens felt their sporting performance was “much better”

or “better” while wearing CLs.

“Children as young as eight years old who need vision correction are as capable as teenagers at wearing and caring for soft contact lenses and should be presented with the option of contact lens wear when vision correction is required,” said Jeffrey Walline, OD, of the Ohio State University College of Optometry, study leader of The Contact Lens in Pediatrics study. “This research demonstrates that both children and teens derive a number of quality of life benefits from CLs, which leads to greater satisfaction with their vision correction.” ■

New CIBA FreshLook Color Studio Allows CL ‘Try-Ons’



ATLANTA—CIBA Vision, the eyecare unit of Novartis (NYSE: NVS), is kicking off a new online consumer marketing tool on the Web site for its FreshLook color contact lenses, www.freshlook-contacts.com.

The new FreshLook Color Studio feature allows consumers to upload photos of themselves to “try on” different colors of CIBA's FreshLook CLs.

To build patient awareness, eyecare practices can place a link to the FreshLook Color Studio on their practice Web site, or provide access to the site in the waiting area of the practice, according to CIBA. ■



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So, for the clearest vision under the sun, be sure to recommend Crizal Sun, the first integrated **ARS** (Anti-Reflective for Sunwear) available anywhere.

The UV protection of Crizal Sun is dependent on material chosen.



www.crizal.com



fashion

By Deirdre Carroll

F.Y.EYE

Bringing her first design to market in 1989, quirky English handbag and accessory designer, Lulu Guinness, has been offering up her whimsical, ultra-feminine designs for nearly 20 years. Having no formal design training apart from a year's foundation course at art school and a long-standing passion for design and fashion, Guinness has built her business based upon her strong personal style and original ideas, with her design inspiration springing partly from retro glamour and partly from modern chic. F.Y.Eye visited the Londoner to get a current take on the eyewear collection she designs in partnership with Tura.

1 What are the most important influences on your design work?

My greatest inspirations are Elsa Schiaparelli, the early 20th century Parisian fashion designer, and the glamour of old Hollywood, but other influences change each season and ideas come from all over, be it an artist or exhibition that I am interested in, a film or my travels.

2 What excites you most about design?

Good ideas that also sell!

3 Describe the ultimate Lulu Guinness woman.

The ultimate Lulu Guinness woman is elegant, glamorous and feminine but

never takes fashion too seriously; someone who wants to show that they have individuality in their taste for accessories.

4 What's been the greatest challenge in interpreting your design philosophy or perspective into an eyewear line?

The lack of space and the scale of the designs. On my handbags and bed linens, I have as much space to work with as I want; with eyewear I have an inch if I'm lucky.

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

My favorite characteristic is that my

collection is wearable with a touch of the whimsical. That is very hard to accomplish in eyewear and I think it is one of the main reasons my brand in eyewear is so successful. A few of my favorite pieces that exemplify this are the optical models; L673, because the shape is so simple but the temples have a sense of fun and whimsy; the L815, which looks like a nice wearable style in rich acetate but the inside temples have my favorite polka dot pattern. This characteristic is also evident in my sunwear collection, but I here I have more overall freedom to play. Take model L458, the Caroline, a beautiful classic oversized shape with my signature lips in epoxy fill. Model L459, the



Stephanie, is a smaller classic shape with an exquisite floral pattern highlighted by a second layer of acetate.

6 What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?

Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself. ■■

SECOND LOOK

KBco Offers Polarized Polycarbonate DP Solutions



Centennial, Colo.—KBco, based here, has developed an expanded base curve offering in single diopter increments called DP Solutions. Polarized Polycarbonate DP Solutions are available with KBco's standard WearGard hard coat or premium Super WearGard hard coat and are offered in the three best selling polarized colors—KBco Gray-C, KBco True Gray, and KBco Brown-C.

According to KBco, DP Solutions lenses are "tailor made for digital processing." The lenses are manufactured with a rigid adherence to quality control which ensures that front side curves, an essential component of digital processing, do not vary from lens to lens.

"However, you don't have to process lenses digitally to enjoy the benefits of this expanded base curve offering," noted Chris Bailey, KBco's marketing manager. "Even conventionally surfaced lenses can take advantage of the superior optics afforded by the additional base curves now available."

DP Solutions will soon be available in 1.67 high-index and hard resin materials, Bailey said. ■■

SECOND LOOK

BPI Intros Versatile UV Activator



MIAMI—BPI (Brain Power Inc.) is introducing the UV Activator, a dual-purpose device that can be used to visually demonstrate the effectiveness of UV blocking lenses and activate photochromic lenses with ultraviolet light of intensity similar to that in sunlight.

The compact unit measures 4 inches high by 6 inches wide by 4 inches deep. It features a UV light source that is discreetly baffled inside a black metal box, placing it away from user's direct view. It illuminates a white target that fluoresces brightly in the presence of UV light. A UV-blocking lens will leave a dark shadow on the fluorescent target. Photochromic lenses will be darkened by the UV light at much the same rate as they would be by natural sunlight. Lenses can be evaluated while still in the frames. ■■

HIGH VISIBILITY

John Varvatos has been named "Designer of the Year" by GQ in their 12th Annual "Men of the Year" issue for December 2007. To demonstrate the Varvatos design aesthetic, actor Casey Affleck (shown), who has been named GQ's "Breakout of the Year" is featured in a six page editorial feature dressed in John Varvatos clothing and John Varvatos Eyewear from **BASE CURVE**.



changeable sunglasses. Ever," said Best of Adventure Gear editor, Steve Casimiro. The Interlock appears in the November/December issue of the magazine...

COUTEUR DESIGNS, a division of the Kenmark Group, has introduced new merchandising materials for Dana Buchman Vision. The modular design of the new merchandising materials allows pieces to be used separately or combined to create unique and



versatile presentations and feature a decorative crocodile pattern in a cream with black lacquer detailing and a Dana Buchman logo. Options include an 8-piece modular display with a 3-frame display stand, a 3-piece display tray and a 2-piece display base. Also available is a 3-piece display tray, 4-piece display stand, 4-piece display tray, free standing mirror and a 1-piece display, with several counter cards, postcards and double-sided posters. All items are complimentary with a minimum purchase of Dana Buchman Vision frames and sunwear. ■■



For the second year in a row, **SMITH OPTICS** has been awarded the "Best of Adventure Gear" award from *National Geographic Adventure*. Smith Optics

Interlock Technology was honored along with 39 other products regarded as essential outdoor gear by an independent panel of 44 of the country's leading outdoor authorities and retailers. "The Smith Interlock looks cool, the lenses are simple to change, bombproof when in place, and optically precise. They're nothing short of the best inter-



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VisionMonday

Salutes...
The Top Lab Achievers of 2007!



Congratulations to the wholesale optical laboratories recognized by Vision Monday's 2007 Top Labs Special Report*. In honor of this outstanding achievement, we have dedicated a special section in this issue just for them. In the following pages, some of these labs share with you a closer look at their business and the services they offer. Read on and find out how they have achieved their success – and how they can help you achieve yours.

Vision Monday's Top Labs Section Sponsored by

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Carl Zeiss Vision Laboratories

Going Beyond the Rx

For a number of years, Carl Zeiss Vision has been a worldwide leader in developing and manufacturing ophthalmic lenses, lens coatings and dispensary technologies. But Carl Zeiss Vision offers much more than the best in lenses and coatings. We want to be sure that eye care professionals and their patients can take advantage of our extensive line of products, so we make it convenient and easy for them to access it. Through our nationwide network of laboratories, Carl Zeiss Vision delivers these products along with the excellent service and support that gives independent eyecare professionals the competitive edge.

Carl Zeiss Vision Laboratories was recently named by Vision Monday as one of the Top 5 Supplier-Owned U.S. Lab Networks. There are a number of reasons Carl Zeiss Vision has achieved this recognition.

Local Service Plus

The Carl Zeiss Vision Network of Laboratories is absolutely committed to providing the personal, local service that eye care professionals expect from their lab of choice. Each lab is able to offer each customer the resources of the entire network, and the full range of technology and precision optics that Carl Zeiss Vision is known for.

Industry-Leading Technology

Carl Zeiss Vision Laboratories provide their customers access to the most advanced lens technologies in the industry that utilize unique and proprietary fabrication technology. These include customized lens designs, such as SOLA HDv which features variable corridor length, and SpaZio, the first prescription wrap lens to provide clear, comfortable vision for every prescription, regardless of the degree of frame wrap.

The Best Lenses, the Best Selection

Carl Zeiss Vision Laboratories feature premium lenses and coatings from Carl Zeiss Vision, including our ZEISS and SOLA product lines. To meet every customer's need, we also provide convenient access to a full range of products from other manufacturers, giving you limitless product options to choose from.

Specialty Work

Throughout the network you will find expertise for even the most difficult or unusual jobs, including glass work and prisms. Present us with your specific need, and we will find a way to execute it for you.

Full Service Dedication

Carl Zeiss Vision Laboratories provide full service to meet the complete range of eye care professional and patient needs, with the quality that you expect from Carl Zeiss Vision, the leader in precision optics. Look to us for all your laboratory service needs and let our success help you build your practice.



“The Carl Zeiss Vision Network of Laboratories is absolutely committed to providing the personal, local service that eye care professionals expect from their lab of choice.”

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CARL ZEISS VISION

Diversified Ophthalmics, Inc.



It's Very CleAR 2007 Was A Banner Year

Vision Monday's Top Labs of 2007: Diversified Ophthalmics is again named as one of the nation's top 25 privately owned labs. A key to this achievement is our continuing focus on supplying quality products including KODAK Lenses and KODAK CleAR™ AR.

Birthday Year: 2007 was Diversified Ophthalmics' Thirtieth Anniversary Year. We are proud of our record of service to ECP's. Part of our way of saying thank-you to ECP's is to partner with Signet Armorlite for special promotions featuring KODAK Lenses with our in-house, fast-turn-around KODAK CleAR AR.

Rising Gas Prices: 2007 was the year of rising gasoline prices. Although it is difficult to be enthusiastic about the upward spiral of gas prices, we successfully partnered with Signet Armorlite to supply free gasoline cards to practices who ordered KODAK CleAR AR. Our "Try It, You'll Like It" approach was sensitive to ECP's concerns about gas prices plus it allowed them to experience the excellent patient responses to KODAK CleAR AR.

Cincinnati's Top 100 – 2007: 2007 brought us the honor of once again being included among the top 100 privately owned businesses in Cincinnati.

What keeps us among the most successful companies? According to Diversified's President & CEO, Dr. Ronald F. Cooke, "Practitioners have largely been forced by third party care plans to run tighter ships. The highly successful practitioners are eliminating inefficiencies of past years. We recognized this trend and shifted our business focus to Single Sourcing, which allows ECP's to order nearly anything they need from us, receive a single monthly statement, and pay with a single check. In addition, we made sure that ECP's had continuing access to patient-pleasing, high quality products through promotions that regularly appear in our Product News newsletter and on our website www.divopt.com."

Make 2008 A Banner Year For Your Practice

Take advantage of our KODAK Unique Lens programs, and promotions for other patient-pleasing and profitable products.

Diversified, the premier Single Source provider for successful practices.



Dr. Ronald F. Cooke - Diversified's President and CEO, formerly an independent practicing optometrist has maintained the company's focus on meeting the needs of independent eye care providers. He is a dedicated proponent of encouraging efficiency and good business practices for ECP's.



Ronald F. Cooke, Jr., B.A., M.B.A. - Diversified's Chief Operating Officer is an A.B.O. certified and Ohio licensed optician. He is in charge of the company's day-to-day operations and has a strong interest in developing and maintaining quality business relationships with Diversified's accounts.



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WWW.DIVOPT.COM

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CINCINNATI, OH
(CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS)

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NEW ALBANY, IN
(LOUISVILLE, KY AREA)

DIVERSIFIED MICHIGAN
ALLEN PARK, MI (DETROIT, MI AREA)

DIVERSIFIED SOUTHEAST
COLUMBIA, SC

DIVERSIFIED UTAH
SALT LAKE CITY, UT

DIVERSIFIED WASHINGTON
SPOKANE, WA

OPTISOURCE
SPRING, TX (HOUSTON, TX AREA)

SUMMIT OPTICS
NASHVILLE, TN

TRIOPTICS
MILWAUKEE, WI

IcareLabs

IcareLabs, a division of Icare Industries, Inc., is the eighth largest independent laboratory in the United States.

Now a second generation, family-owned lab based in St. Petersburg, Florida, they are partnered with distributors from all of the industry's leading lens manufacturers such as Varilux, Signet Armorlite, Transitions, Hoya, Zeiss and many more.

These partnerships have become their niche, allowing them to be at the forefront in bringing a full range of new products and services to the eye care professionals they serve across the nation. Programs such as Signet Armorlite's KODAK Lens co-op marketing funds and product launch promotions of KODAK Unique Lenses and KODAK Precise Short™ Lenses bring a new meaning to the word "partnership". These and other customized programs from manufacturers have been well received and have been a benefit to their customers, lab partners and the company's overall strategies.

Remaining independently owned continues to give IcareLabs the freedom to align its customers with the right products based on the needs of their business and patients. This independence also allows IcareLabs to continually provide a personal level of customer service

and value that its customers have come to expect and deserve.

As the company celebrates its upcoming 40th Anniversary, it continues to keep an eye on the future. The company recently completed multiple phases of a multi-million dollar renovation this year, an effort which has introduced multiple pieces of state-of-the-art equipment (including an upcoming in-house AR rollout) and the addition of experienced staff. These renovations have allowed dramatic increases in job capacity and quality that have only enhanced the value their customers benefit from.

Originally founded by John W. Payne, IcareLabs continues to operate with his values and innovative spirit today under the direction of his sons Scott Payne (CEO), Skip Payne (President) and grandson James Payne (Director of Technology).



ICARELABS
 4399 35TH ST. N
 ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33714
 TEL: 877-422-7352
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“Remaining independently owned continues to give IcareLabs the freedom to align its customers with the right products based on the needs of their business and patients.”



Katz & Klein Inc.

Independently Changing the Future of Vision

“Katz & Klein’s complete prescription laboratory is backed by a team of 50 experienced optical technicians. Our Customer Service Representatives are the best in the west! They are knowledgeable, courteous, and able to answer your questions and inquiries promptly.”

Since 1937, we at Katz & Klein, have taken our motto “Sincerity in Service” very seriously. Katz & Klein is proud to be the oldest Independent Optical Laboratory in California, and one of the largest experienced labs on the West Coast. Our purpose is to enhance the quality of vision for all.

Katz & Klein is committed to maintaining our state of the art, full service laboratory. Processing prescriptions faster, with precise accuracy, is our focus. The in-house Anti-Reflective coating lab, featuring KODAK CleAR™ Coating, provides the highest quality AR coating available.

Katz & Klein’s complete prescription laboratory is backed by a team of 50 experienced optical technicians. Our Customer Service Representatives are the best in the west! They are knowledgeable, courteous, and able to answer your questions and inquiries promptly.

Our outside Sales Department is comprised of experienced Optical professionals who are certified speakers and presenters of the latest in lens technology. We are committed to the industry and support many Professional Schools and Associations.

Katz & Klein consistently strives to offer the best service to our customers. One way that we serve is by hosting continuing education seminars throughout the year. In 2007, we held two Signet Armorlite KODAK Lens sponsored events. One presentation featured the KODAK Unique Progressive Lens, Vision First Design™ and Direct Digital Surfacing. The second featured a presentation on the importance and understanding of Anti-Reflective Coatings, of which KODAK CleAR Coating is our top branded AR.



Katz & Klein Managers Team. Back row from left to right: Ken Brand, Steve LaDuke, Candy Corcoran. Front row from left to right: Bob Smiley, Richelle Garcia, Betty Marvos, Dawn Fualau

Katz & Klein is also proud to partner with Signet Armorlite on their PracticePlus® program. Building strong relationships with our Independent Eye Care Professionals and their Associations are important.

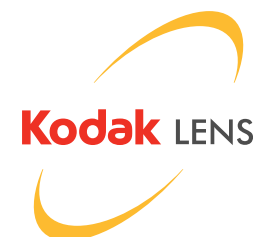
Signet Armorlite’s support and programs have truly helped us to become one of the top 25 independently owned laboratories. We are the lab your practice can grow with.

Visit our award winning website: www.katzandklein.com

(Contract VSP Laboratory, Members of P.E.N. and Vision West)



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Precision Optical Group

Discover the Precision Advantage



Customer Service: Front (L-R):Melanie Crago, Connie Marxen, Manager Holly Ferber, Rhonda Ringsdorf. Back (L-R): Ginger Squires, Nicole Ward, Cyndie Sevier, Lori Norris



Sales: Front (L-R): Carlene Titus (existing accounts), Mary Fleming (wholesale). Back (L-R): Sales & Marketing Director Shannon Waigand, Joedy Krings (new accounts), Misty Johnston (existing accounts)



Mike Tamerius, Production Manager Lance Christensen, Matt Somers

We're listening...

...to you! As more of our customers discover the advantages of online ordering, we're actually expanding our customer service staff. Puzzling? Not really. It's not just about writing up your order; it's about providing you with exceptional service.

We've also increased our sales staff, so that we can focus on strengthening the relationships we've built with our customers. We're excited about really getting to know you during the coming year, as we strive to become your one stop shop. We offer a wide variety of lenses, as well as all the supplies and services you need, and the information and training that goes along with that.

We're watching...

...and sometimes waiting. When you're always on the cutting edge, someone's bound to get hurt. We keep a trained eye on industry trends, embracing - not chasing - technology. Some would say you get what you pay for. At Precision Optical Group, Inc., we believe you should only pay for what you get. Timing is everything, and when the time is right, we invest in the technology that makes the most sense.

We're learning...

...that we have more work to do. As we celebrated our 15th anniversary this year, we found ourselves moving up the ranks of independent labs to number 18 - we must be doing something right! But we're not resting on our laurels; with the addition of a new production manager, we are more committed than ever to increasing quality and decreasing turn times.

We're growing...

...to better meet your needs by increasing our workforce and investing in training. Here in the Heartland we think it's the people that really make a difference.

When all is said and done...

...it's really about value, isn't it? You'll find it where high quality, great service, and low prices meet. If we can make your day a little easier and more profitable, then we've done our job. We'll do that by simply staying true to our mission statement - where you, our customer, are at its very heart:

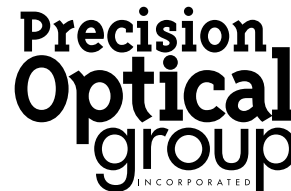
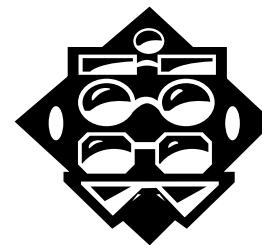
We promise...

- ...to provide a consistent quality product that meets the demands of our customers.
- ...to offer the lowest prices in the industry.
- ...to afford our customers the best delivery rate, in the industry, while keeping customer needs first.
- ...to establish a culture that rewards outstanding achievement and commitment to our mission.

Isn't it time you discovered the Precision Advantage?

“If we can make your day a little easier and more profitable, then we've done our job.”

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Rite-Style Optical

George Lee, founder and CEO of Rite-Style Optical Co., and his family are eagerly planning a remarkable celebration.

George Lee, founder and CEO of Rite-Style Optical Co., and his family are eagerly planning a remarkable celebration.

This June, the wholesale optical laboratory George opened in 1948 is turning 60 years old. During this anniversary year the Lee family will be reminiscing over countless events, milestones and relationships that have all been integral parts of Rite-Style Optical's long-standing success.

What's more remarkable is that, even after 60 years, George Lee is not settling into retirement mode. Instead, he is forging into the future, positioning Rite-Style Optical as an industry leader by investing in all the new technology and equipment required to produce personalized, digitally surfaced, freeform lenses right here in Omaha, NE. "I never thought I'd see the day where I would become a true lens manufacturer," said George. "It's incredible to think that Rite-Style Optical can now make a fully customized and personalized lens, designed and produced specifically for one patient."

Rite-Style's focus for its seventh decade is to remain INDEPENDENT, offering all brands of eyewear products, and allowing its customers, all discerning INDEPENDENT ECPs, the ability to choose whichever lens best fits the needs of each individual patient. A key factor to the on-going success as an independent lab is cooperative partnerships with non-competing lens suppliers.

Shamir Insight has been extremely supportive with Rite-Style's technological advances to produce in-house customized, digitally back-surfaced, freeform lenses. In fact, this year's production of Shamir Autograph, combined with the promotion of other Shamir lenses, recently earned Rite-Style Optical the title of **Shamir's 2007 Lab of the Year**. RSO plans to add other Shamir freeform lenses to the menu as soon as the designs are released and installed.

RSO has a close relationship with Signet Armorlite, supplier of KODAK Lenses and RSO's new in-house AR coating, KODAK Clear™ Coating. Signet

Aarmorlite's partnership philosophy provides Rite-Style funding to promote KODAK Lens products and the greatest flexibility in deciding how to best use the funds. For several months this year, Rite-Style customers enjoyed "Treating You Rite", a promotion that paid RSO Fun Money for using KODAK Lens products. Some offices earned as much as \$300 - \$400 each month towards fun activities and staff rewards. Signet Armorlite's co-op funds also allow Rite-Style to host educational seminars throughout the country with Jeff LaPlante, one of the industry's most informative and entertaining speakers.

George Lee credits his loyal employees for the high levels of quality, service and craftsmanship RSO customers experience. 37 of the 100-member staff have worked at Rite-Style over 20 years - ten of them have been here longer than 30 years.

"And most of all," concludes George Lee, "loyal customers made our 60 successful years possible. We thank all of you."

"And most of all," concludes George Lee, "loyal customers made our 60 successful years possible. We thank all of you."



**RITE-STYLE OPTICAL
 P.O. BOX 3068
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Robertson Optical

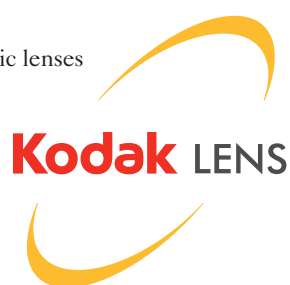
In 1958, the founders of Robertson Optical Laboratories had a vision. Today, that vision continues...

50 Years A Celebration of Vision

For 50 years, Robertson Optical's vision has been to provide eye care professionals and their patients with the utmost *quality* in lenses, eyewear, craftsmanship and service. As a result, Robertson has witnessed a remarkable growth, now ranking 11th in Vision Monday's Top Independent Labs. Eyewear fashions have changed through the years, but Robertson's *quality* remains unsurpassed. As the vision continues, call a Robertson lab to experience this impeccable *quality*.

What products and services are offered by Robertson Optical?

- Full-service, state-of-the-art, in-house AR coating facilities
- Zeiss lenses and in-house coatings, including Teflon® Clear Coat Lenses
- Signet Armorlite/KODAK Lenses and in-house KODAK CleAR™ AR Coating
- Transitions® lenses
- Shamir Lenses
- Rodenstock USA
- KODAK Unique Lenses
- Resolution Lenses
- Seiko Pentax products
- Younger Trivex™
- Quality drill mounts
- InstaShades
- Santinelli beveling
- Polarized lenses
- LifeRx Photochromic lenses



- SunRx Polarized lenses
- Coppertone Polarized lenses
- Frame and lens packages
- Kids' packages
- Much more



What can customers expect?

- Real people answering phones
- Friendly, personal staff
- Next-day turnaround
- Licensed opticians and technicians
- On-line ordering and job tracking

Robertson Optical expresses thanks to KODAK Lens and its promotions, along with other manufacturers, for being a part of our vision.



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VSP Laboratories

Service You Can Trust



We believe private-practice eyecare delivers the best in personalized care and value. Moreover, in an increasingly competitive marketplace where complex lens designs and materials are constantly being introduced, private practitioners need a lab they can trust with an unwavering commitment to quality and service.

VSP Labs are your source for all your ophthalmic lens needs. In an industry where expertise and efficiency have never been more important, VSP Labs consistently provide the highest quality, fastest service and best value pricing.

Private-practice doctors are the foundation of our business. In fact, they are our only business! Together with VSP's Family of Companies, we focus on what matters to you — your patients.

Experience

For more than 30 years, thousands of private-practice doctors have relied on our Sacramento, California location to deliver the highest quality eyewear at the lowest possible cost. As one of the nation's largest wholesale labs, we produce over 500,000 prescriptions annually with greater than 98 percent accuracy and 100 percent commitment to our customers' needs.

Building on that expertise and heritage of great service and quality, VSP opened its Columbus, Ohio

Lab in 2003. Our Ohio Lab leads the industry with the latest in automation software and robotics.

In the fall of 2007, Legends 4.0 Optical Lab in Lewisville, Texas was added to VSP's Family of Companies. Over several decades, the Benedict Laboratories have proven to be a source for quality, service and value. Whether the orders are private or VSP...this tradition continues.

Quality

We maintain stringent quality assurance measures. State-of-the-art automation combined with highly skilled lab technicians who personally verify that each lens meets our specifications every step of the way; ensure the quality of the products we deliver.

Choice

We are proud to offer top-quality brands such as: Varilux, Hoya, Sola, Zeiss, Kodak, Shamir, Seiko/Pentax, Transitions, Carat, Crizal, Alizè and Teflon®. Our in-house capabilities include AcuityPLUS® Platinum XP, AcuityPLUS Platinum, AcuityPLUS Titanium, ClearView, ClearView Ultra, Zeiss Carat Advantage, SET, GET, and soon-to-be added Teflon anti-reflective coatings.

Service

With more than 250 years of combined optical experience, our Doctor Service Representatives are the

most knowledgeable in the field and dedicated to helping you serve your patients. It's nice to know they're on your team. We also offer convenient online ordering through Eyefinity, 24 hours a day, seven days a week; because we understand that sometimes your orders can't wait.

“In an industry where expertise and efficiency have never been more important, VSP Labs consistently provide the highest quality, fastest service and best value pricing.”

VSP LABS



OUR LOCATIONS:

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FAX: (866) 926-0400

VSP LAB COLUMBUS
2605 ROHR ROAD, LOCKBOURNE, OH 43137
CUSTOMER SERVICE PHONE: (800) 251-5150
FAX: (800) 582-0467

VSP LAB SACRAMENTO
3131 FITE CIRCLE, SACRAMENTO, CA 95827
CUSTOMER SERVICE PHONE: (800) 952-5518
FAX: (800) 243-6966

WEB SITES:
LEGENDS4.COM
VSPLAB.COM





Winchester Optical

Winchester Optical is a family owned optical lab located in upstate New York.

Ben Lynch serves as the President, while his sons Brian and Mike serve as the Vice-Presidents. The lab has operated since 1902 and is very proud to be the oldest independent lab listed in the Vision Monday Top Labs list for 2007.

Winchester Optical has two convenient full service locations to serve eye care professionals – Elmira, New York and Macedon, New York (near Rochester). Winchester Optical has always been identified as a lab with a very knowledgeable staff, both with their customer service and sales team, as well as fine craftsmanship with their work. Along with everyday orders that come in, Winchester Optical processes many specialty jobs, including very high power and prism on a daily basis. The company is fortunate to have veteran optical leaders in many key areas - the two individuals that head up our Specials Surfacing Department have 54 and 44 years of experience. The Finish side has a 30 year veteran and Customer Service is headed up by a 42 year optical veteran.

With this kind of experience, you would expect specials to take the limelight, but Winchester Optical is also geared for high production and top-notch quality. During 2007, we have invested over a million dollars in new technology which has updated both locations with

robotic edging and the Elmira facility with a robotic generator as well as digital surfacing machinery to produce the latest advanced progressive lenses. Currently, at the Elmira location, there is ongoing construction of a brand new Crizal EXT lab that should be open around the end of March 2008.

In addition to eyeglass lenses, Winchester Optical also has a full department to handle all your gas-permeable contact lens needs. This department is headed by an individual with 40 years of contact lens experience.

Winchester Optical has achieved outstanding sales this year as a result of many ongoing sales programs like the exciting electronics promotion that featured KODAK Progressive Lens designs – Precise, Concise and Unique.

At Winchester Optical we value our employees and customers. We are lucky to have such a fine staff working with us to help us achieve our listing in the Top Labs list for 2007. We are also proud that we are the oldest optical lab on the list. If you are looking for a lab that can handle all your needs from an answer on the phone, the simplest prescription, in-house anti-reflective coating as well as your occasional -32.00-2.50 (with some prism to make it a little challenging), then we're your lab. Give us a call today!



“Winchester Optical has always been identified as a lab with a very knowledgeable staff, both with their customer service and sales team, as well as fine craftsmanship with their work.

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Three Rivers Optical



Three Rivers Optical brings the next generation of lens processing to customers.

Located in suburban Pittsburgh, Three Rivers Optical occupies a 30,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art, full-service manufacturing facility. Today the lab is made up of a team of 75 employees, led by Steven Seibert, Joseph Seibert and Mary Ann Zappas. While the company has grown over the years, its family-oriented tradition has remained the same. This commitment to family, employees and customers, along with a profound dedication to excellence in every facet of the lab business, has contributed to Three Rivers Optical's overall success.

Recognized as an award winning lab, Three Rivers Optical has achieved the Transitions Lab of the Year award in the past and is frequently recognized in Vision Monday's Top 25 Labs.

To satisfy the changing demands of its customers, Three Rivers Optical has consistently reinvented itself to stay on top of the newest technologies. The lab was one of the first independents to become certified to apply Teflon AR in house. The recent addition of a second digital lathe to support the TRO Seg has enabled the introduction of the TRO Blended Seg and the Free Lens Series, giving customers the ability to order for the first time, a digitally surfaced lens ground exactly to the prescription they refracted.

Years of dedication to quality, service and technology have made Three Rivers Optical the successful full-service lab that it is today. According to Steve Seibert, CEO, "We are proud of what we have become. We had a great foundation created by our parents and have maintained strong family ties while enjoying continued growth and success."



**THREE RIVERS OPTICAL
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Left to right, Joseph Seibert, Steven Seibert and Mary Ann Zappas.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

THE TOP LABS of 2007!



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– Paul Lantinga, See Worthy, Inc.,
2007 First Time Attendee

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NEWS VIEWS

Gerber Coburn Launches New Advanced Lens Processing System With Free-form Capability

INDIANAPOLIS—Gerber Coburn is making its debut in the digital surfacing arena with the introduction of two new products, the DTL200 generator and the MAAT polisher. The two products, unveiled last month at the Optical Laboratories Association (OLA) annual meeting here, bring new technology to digital lens processing. Together, they form the basis of the company's Advanced Lens Processing System (ALPS) with free-form capability.

"The launch of our Advanced Lens Processing System and its free-form processing capability is a milestone for Gerber Coburn," said Stephen Lovass, president of Gerber Coburn and senior vice president of Gerber Scientific. "The system has been qualified to produce lenses with the Epson design software. It has also been qualified to produce Signet Armorlite's Crossbows lens design. As we go forward, we will continue to qualify the system for other branded lens designs, giving our customers as many choices as possible for their digital lens production needs."

Alex Incera, executive director, marketing for Gerber Coburn noted that the system offers labs "an expandable product platform to automation and

Gerber Coburn's new Advanced Lens Processing System offers labs an expandable platform to automation and free-form.



free-form" that is "able to adapt to new lenses and materials in the future." He said labs can start with the high speed DTL and upgrade later to automation and cut-to-polish. Adding the MAAT polisher will then give the laboratory digital lens processing capabilities.

The newest member to Gerber Coburn's DTL generator series, the DTL200, employs precision diamond turning technology to produce free-form lens surfaces. It is equipped with a voice coil axis, or v-axis, designed to ensure that the targeted lens geometry is replicated in the final lens.

The new MAAT (Multi-Axis Adaptive Technology) polisher is Gerber

Coburn's solution for polishing free-form and cut-to-polish lenses. Its proprietary, multi-axis design tilts the lens in order to keep the polishing tool perpendicular to the area being polished, while accurately controlling pressure so that material is removed evenly throughout the entire surface of the lens. The sub-aperture polishing system eliminates traditional lap inventory and management, significantly reducing labor cost and laboratory space.

The MAAT polisher's automated lap management system selects the correct lap for each lens, streamlining the process and increasing production yields. Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology ensures that the correct lap is used to polish the lens. The RFID chip also measures the amount of usage of the lap, and the system automatically discards the lap when it has been fully consumed. ■

ELOA Opens Crizal Alizé/TD2 Facility at Duffens Optical

DALLAS—Essilor Laboratories of America (ELOA) hosted the grand opening of its Crizal Alizé/TD2 Technologies Center at Duffens Optical on Dec. 8. The new facility, located in Denver, Colo., is the Rocky Mountain region's largest capacity anti-reflective lens facility and offers the most technologically advanced products and services, according to ELOA.

"We are delighted to add state-of-the-art Crizal manufacturing technology at Duffens Optical," said Ron Schlotzhauer, regional ELOA vice president. "The Center is the region's largest and exclusive manufacturer of Crizal Alizé with ClearGuard. Since 1919, Duffens Optical has focused on the needs of independent eyecare professionals. We are committed to providing the best premium products, laboratory lens processing technologies, and superior service to our customers and their patients." ■

Nexus Vision Moves HQ to New Facility in Optical Village



Lens inspection is an important quality control step at Nexus Vision's new coating facility.

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Nexus Vision recently moved its headquarters to a 7,500-square foot facility in Grove City, a suburb of Columbus, Ohio. Located in the Optical Village zone, the new laboratory is situated near the DHL shipping hub to provide its customers next-day shipping in most cases.

The organization, comprised of independent laboratories primarily located in the Southeast, will continue their commitment to the growth of AR lenses through proprietary products NVision Plus featuring an oleophobic topcoat and NVision which has a hydrophobic topcoat, the company said.

"Due to continued growth since our grand opening in 2004, we identified the need to expand our facility and services. We are excited to be settled in our new facility which allows us to have a state of the art anti-reflective coating laboratory. It also provides an opportunity for Nexus Vision to further expand its operations to fulfill requests by our customers for additional products and services," stated Gerry Shaw, general manager/managing partner of the group. ■

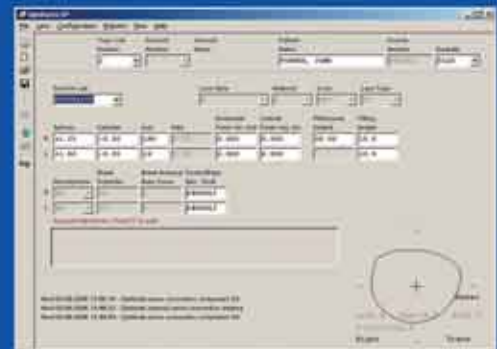


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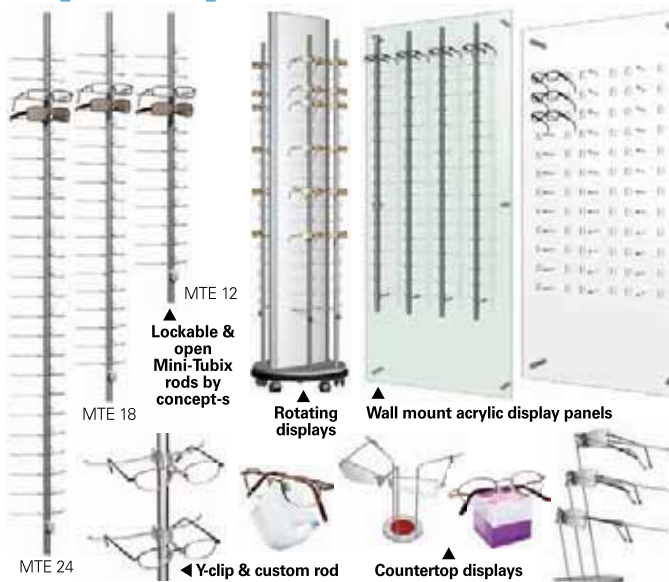
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Court Ruling Requires Change To Policies for Paid Leave



Hedley Lawson, Jr.

Navigating employment leaves can be a complex part of your business even if you work in human resources. Depending on the type of leave, there are a variety of laws and regulations to know. These leaves include the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), state family leave laws, the Pregnancy Disability Leave (PDL), Paid Family Leave (PFL), and federal and state workers' compensation to name just a few. Most leaves are "job protected" leaves, meaning that the employee's job must be held open during the leave, yet others may not require job protection.

To assist you with paid leave issues that may arise in your business, here is a three-part analysis that you can use when such a leave request arises:

1. Determine the leave obligations that apply to you, the employer.
2. Determine the eligibility of the individual employee to each leave type.
3. Consider the facts and circumstances related to the leave.

(There is a two-part eligibility test under the FMLA. First, the employer is eligible if it employs 50 or more employees within a 75-mile radius. Next, the individual employee must have been employed by the employer for at least one year and have 1,250 hours of service with the employer.)

Repa vs. Roadway Express

As a result of a recent United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit ruling, a fourth step is now required.

Alice Repa, a Roadway Express employee, suffered a non-work related injury requiring a leave of six weeks. Since she was covered by a Teamsters

labor contract, Repa was eligible for short-term disability coverage. Repa received these benefits during her leave, which was covered under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

In addition, Repa was paid five days sick leave by Roadway under its policy of requiring the use of sick and vacation benefits during FMLA leaves, a contemporary policy of many other employers. Despite the fact that she was properly paid, Repa sued Roadway for allegedly violating the FMLA, by requiring her to utilize vacation and sick

"Most leaves are "job protected" leaves, meaning that the employee's job must be held open during the leave, yet others may not require job protection."

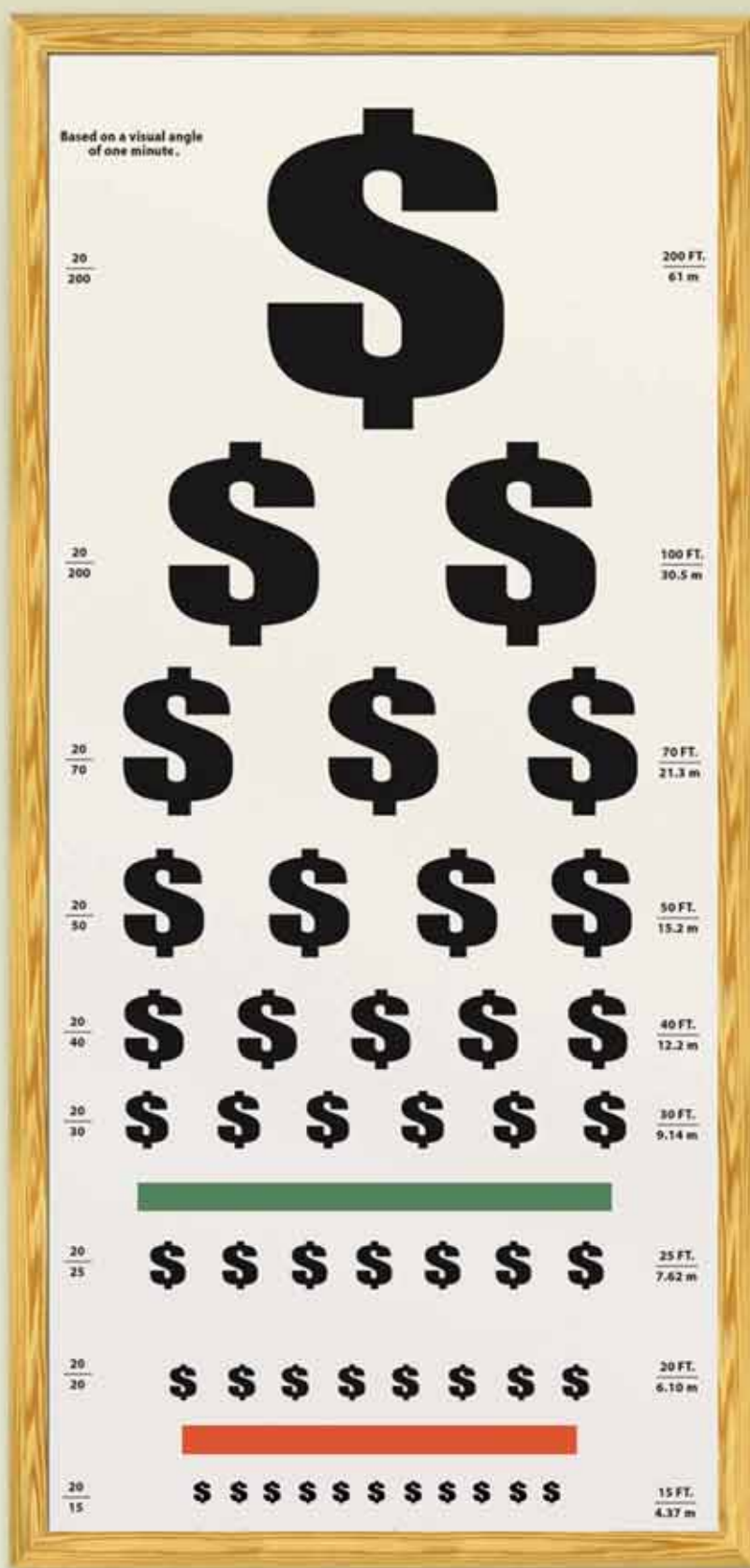
leave during a disability. (It is common for some employees to maintain these benefits for future use, such as a planned vacation as opposed to be required to use the benefits).

In their analysis, the court agreed with Repa that Roadway should not have required the utilization of sick leave during this FMLA leave, on the basis that Repa was receiving other benefits during the leave. As one can readily see, the court's analysis raises issues for employers who administer various leaves are subject to FMLA.

This case, like other employment case law, highlights recent court decisions that can adversely affect employers. Remember, when drafting leave letters, make sure a documented election is completed by the employee confirming the utilization of employer-paid benefits.

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

Looking Back on Another Year in Optical



Cathy Ciccolella
Senior Editor

It's always fun in December to browse back through the past year's copies of **Vision Monday** and recall the key news events we highlighted in print each month...kind of a walk down memory lane for the eyewear/eyecare industry.

Taking that reminiscing stroll, it's obvious that 2007—like virtually every year in my nearly two decades of reporting on this business—has been a period of change, of surprises, of mergers and acquisitions big and small...and finally, of progress in delivering eyecare to a broad spectrum of consumers while providing for their eyewear needs (be they fashion, function, or an amalgam of both) over the past 12 months.

This year has seen more than a dozen significant mergers/acquisitions—including two that in terms of their purchase prices were real whoppers: a Warburg Pincus affiliate's \$4.5 billion (including debt repayment)

takeover of contact lens pioneer Bausch & Lomb, which closed in late October, and last month's \$2.1 billion acquisition of Oakley by Luxottica Group, completed in mid-November. (Luxottica also made the largest retail acquisition of this year when it paid \$110 million for roughly 100 D.O.C Optics stores at the end of February.)

The B&L and Oakley transactions, in addition to providing major amounts of money to the stockholders of the acquired companies, each had its own unique elements that made the two fun to report on, and hopefully, to read about. In the case of the B&L deal, the entry into the arena of a competitive bidder, Advanced Medical Optics, a few weeks after B&L and Warburg Pincus signed their acquisition agreement raised the possibility of a serious bidding war that instead fizzled out amidst the public release of some increasingly rancorous correspondence between B&L and AMO.

As for the Luxottica/Oakley deal, the sheer size and market clout of the two firms involved—and the obvious synergies on both the retail and wholesale

sides of these compatible industry giants—made it perhaps the most-talked about story of the year from the time the acquisition was announced in late June. With transitioning in this merger just picking up steam, Luxottica/Oakley and how the two meld is likely to be one of next year's key stories as well.

Will more deals of this magnitude pop up in the year ahead? Will the big-get-bigger pattern of independent optical labs being bought by larger lab

2007 has been a period of change, of surprises, of mergers and acquisitions big and small...and finally, of progress in delivering eyecare to a broad spectrum of consumers.

chains—and recently, on a smaller scale, by managed-vision powerhouse Vision Service Plan—continue throughout 2008? Will economy-pinchd suppliers be forced to turn to outside financial investors to help them stay afloat? And what additional retail optical chains might be ripe for acquisition?

I can't wait to see how next year plays out, and I hope **VM's** readers feel the same way. In the meantime, here's to a healthy, safe and prosperous 2008. ■

What's Your Opinion?

Vision Monday wants to hear our readers' opinions on issues that affect today's eyewear/eyecare business. We welcome comments about our coverage of the optical industry as well.

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Got more to say? If you'd like to write a column on a subject you're close to and passionate about, **Vision Monday** welcomes your submissions. Please submit a proposal for your column to Mary Kane, Executive Editor of **Vision Monday** at mkane@jobson.com, or by traditional mail at the address above.

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NEW YORK—There's something different about **VisionMonday.com** so check out our redesigned Web site now featuring a fresh new look and enhanced features. We've organized the content from our most recent issues in a new way—by topic and category so you can look up information as you need it. New features on the redesigned site include the industry's first-ever video channel, **Vision Monday Web TV**, highlighting the latest on special events, designers, brand messages, lenses and new technologies and practice management.

We've also added a downloadable pdf version of the most recent issue of **VM**. And all the past favorites, such as links to our **Enewsletters** and the latest stock quotes and financial news in **OptiStock** are still available.

Of course, the latest industry news and Breaking News is still front and center, and users can watch for special Web features.

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Recent Acquisition Boosts Q3 Revenues for Emerging Vision

GARDEN CITY, N.Y.—Sterling Optical parent Emerging Vision (OTC BB: ISEE.OB) saw its net revenues soar in both its third quarter ended Sept. 30 and the first nine months of this year. The company attributed the increases primarily to its acquisitions of the Combine Optical Management buying group in August 2006 and of Canada's The Optical Group in August 2007.

In Q3, Emerging Vision had total revenues of \$15.7 million, up 142.3 percent, according to its 10Q report filed this week with

the Securities and Exchange Commission. Net income for the period was \$907,000, up from \$122,000 in last year's third quarter.

In the quarter, the firm's 13 company-owned stores generated \$1.4 million in revenues, up 43.6 percent (at the end of last year's Q3 Emerging Vision had eight company-owned stores). Comparable-store sales rose 7 percent in the quarter. Emerging Vision's Vision Care of California HMO had revenues of \$889,000 in Q3, up 4 percent; buying group revenues were \$11.6 million.

In the first nine months of 2007, Emerging Vision's total revenues rose 138 percent to \$32.55 million. The company had net income of \$1.7 million in the period, down from \$1.85 million in 2006's first nine months.

Sales at the company-owned stores were up 38.5 percent in the first three quarters of 2007, to just over \$4 million; comp-store sales rose 4.6 percent. Vision Care of California did \$2.6 million in revenues in the nine-month period, up 3.3 percent, while the buying group business generated \$20.5 million in revenues. ■

ECCA Chain Posts Gains in Q3

SAN ANTONIO—Eye Care Centers of America saw its total net revenues increase to \$122.9 million in its third quarter ended Sept. 29, up from \$114.4 million in last year's Q3. Comparable-store sales rose 6.5 percent in the period, ECCA's 17th consecutive quarter of positive comp-store growth.

The 408-store chain's net income in the quarter was \$5.9

million, vs. a net loss of \$2.5 million in the same period in 2006.

During Q3, ECCA opened eight new stores, seven of them in the great Chicago market. The company expects to have opened a total of 21 locations in Chicago by year-end, according to its 10-Q form filed this week with the SEC.

In the first nine months of 2007, ECCA's net revenues reached

\$369.8 million, up from \$338 million in the same period last year. Comp-store sales were up 6.3 percent in the first three quarters. Net income in the first nine months was \$23.5 million, vs. \$10.7 million in 2006's first nine months.

For the first nine months of this year, ECCA's revenues included \$10.4 million in managed-care reimbursements from Davis Vision. ■

Allergan Sees Q3 Sales Gains

IRVINE, Calif.—In its third quarter ended Sept. 28, Allergan's (NYSE: AGN) sales of eyecare pharmaceuticals rose 13.5 percent (up 10.6 percent at constant currency rates) to \$457.7 million.

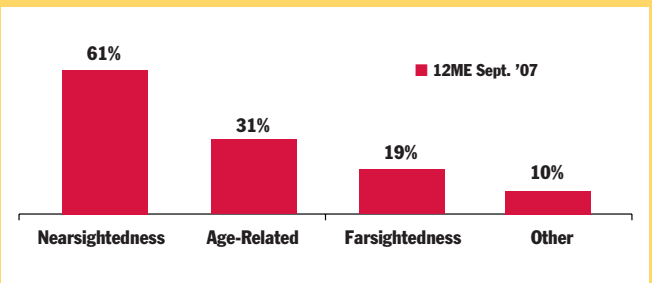
In the first nine months of this year, Allergan did just under \$1.3 billion in eyecare pharmaceutical sales, a 12.9 percent increase (up 10.4 percent at constant currency rates).

The company's total prod-

uct sales in Q3 rose 23.6 percent (up 20.9 percent at constant currency rates) to \$978.7 million. Net income for the period was \$157.4 million, vs. \$106.4 million in last year's third quarter. ■

DATA POINT

Reasons for Using Vision Correction



Over half of respondents said nearsightedness is the reason they use vision correction. In the 12 months ending Sept. '07, 61% of respondents said nearsightedness is the reason they use vision correction. Age-related is the reason 31% of respondents said they use vision correction in the 12 months ending Sept. '07. Over the same period, 19% of respondents said farsightedness is the reason they use vision correction. Lastly, 10% of respondents said they use vision correction for some 'other' reason in the 12 months ending Sept. '07.

Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA
 Total Annual VisionWatch Sample Size: 100,000 consumer respondents per year
 Data is for the 12ME (months ending) September 2007.

BY THE NUMBERS The latest figures

17%

Of those who have had an initial vision correction surgery, 17% had the surgery performed on only one eye. Comparatively, 83% had vision correction surgery on both eyes.

10%

Percent of those who are 'extremely likely' or 'very likely' to buy a new pair of plano sunglasses costing \$50 or more in the next 6 months.

21%

Percent of those who said they paid extra for anti-reflective coating because they were told it would prevent reflection from behind.

29%

Percent who said they have ever suffered from dry eyes since having vision correction surgery.

Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA
 Total Annual VisionWatch Sample Size: 100,000 consumer respondents per year
 Data is for the 12ME (months ending) September 2007.
 Refractive Surgery data is for the 6ME September 2007.



Happy Holidays



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