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# VISION

MARCH 17, 2008

VOL. 22 NO. 3 \$15

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**Acquisition by Houchens facilitates expansion by Cohen's Fashion Optical**
  
**page 8**

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# VisionMonday


The Newsmagazine for the Eye Care Industry

# Building the Modern Independent "Super" Practice



Today's independent eyecare professionals are on the move. Many of the most successful "super" practices are as proactive about their eyecare delivery as they are about the business of dispensing. Vision Monday takes a look at four such practices to highlight how these groups are carving out an important niche for their businesses and the markets they serve.

Page 39

## NEWSMAKERS



### Charmant USA at 25

A look back at this titanium leader's achievements and the firm's plans for the future.

**page 14**

## EXAM LANES

### The SECO Scene

SECO Int'l sees increase in attendance; Bill Lord, OD, installed as new president.

**page 45**

- A Q&A with Barney Dougher, president of Hoya Vision Care North America. page 10**
- Federal Appeals Court rules VSP not entitled to federal tax exemption; not-for-profit company to appeal. page 16**
- Updated environment, sleeker mix drives Sunglass Hut growth worldwide. page 26**



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**Matt Lytle**

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

Dear Sender,

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

Shamir Research & Development Team - Israel

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

Hi Folks,

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

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

Best Regards,

Matt Lytle  
VP Marketing  
Shamir Insight, Inc.  
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## IN THIS ISSUE

### News

- U.S. Vision chain to take over leased opticals in BJ's Clubs ..... 8
- OWA to honor De Long with Pleiades Award ..... 19
- Cooper Companies names head of CL unit ..... 20
- JMI acquires Gerber Communications, Practice Advancement Associates .. 22
- New speakers set for VM's Global Summit ..... 28
- Expo East Conference Preview 36**

### Scene & Heard

- Drivewear launched in Trinidad & Tobago ..... 26
- SECO Int'l draws ECPs from across nation ..... 32

### Exam Lanes

- Luxtottica gets aggressive with EyeMed managed vision plan .... 45

### Retail Dispensary

#### Launches

- Charmant introduces decorative ladies titanium ..... 46
- A&A Optical bows XXL sun ..... 48

#### Second Looks

- Fendi offers new styles for Spring '08 ..... 50
- Allison presents new styles in the Dunhill Collection ..... 51
- Nine West celebrates 10 years in optical ..... 52

#### Columns

- F.Y.Eye ..... 54
- Contact Lenses ..... 56

#### Inside the Lab

- Santinelli introduces new entry-level edger ..... 58

#### Business Essentials

- Anticipating workplace changes in 2008 ..... 66

#### Opinion

- The 'business' of giving ..... 68

#### Balance Sheet

- Advanced Medical Optics posts losses for Q4, FY '07 ..... 70
- FGX '07 sales rise 14.9 percent to \$240.5 million ..... 70



**Marge Axelrad**  
Editorial Director



## Steps to Success: Not the Same Old Thing

### EDITOR'S NOTE

One of my favorite quotes has always been the one from Albert Einstein: "The definition of 'insanity' is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

We're all a bit guilty of this in our lives and working worlds, which I guess means we're all just a bit crazy.

But I was struck by the way some people in fact do step out of the norm and try to reinvent their businesses when we were putting together the "super practices" profiles we feature in this month's VM.

The optical marketplace and vision care environment of 2008 is certainly unlike the one that existed 10 or even five years ago. The competitive landscape is different. Modern technology is different. The consumer is different. Vision care solutions are different. The economy is different.

To remain unchanged in one's approach and

attitude to how a practice is run, even if that's meant past success, isn't always healthy. It doesn't mean that change for change's sake is absolutely necessary but actually, it can be a good idea to be proactive about considering new ideas and implementing them.

All of the independents we feature in this month's Cover Story are taking actions to stay ahead and in control of their positions in their local and regional markets and in the minds of their patients. They are building and rebuilding; they are planning and accommodating change; they are investing in systems that not only help them manage their business and daily time better and more profitably but are using technologies to 'wow' patients during the exam and dispensing process.

Finding ways to spark new perceptions of eyewear and communicate the real "value" of eyecare, its complexity and scope, to patients is the next successful horizon for independent ECPs and all optical retailers.

And there's nothing loony about that. ■■

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## NEWS VIEWS

# Houchens Acquisition to Aid Cohen's Growth

NEW YORK—With the purchase on Feb. 29 by Bowling Green, Ky.-based Houchens Industries, Inc. of the franchise division of Cohen's Fashion Optical, one of the largest optical chains in the U.S., Cohen's expansion will be accelerated via new franchises as well as potential acquisitions within the next several years, Robert Cohen, president and CEO of Cohen's told **VM**.

Houchens, Cohen pointed out, a diversified conglomerate, is one of the country's largest 100 percent employee-owned (ESOP) firms, with current revenues of almost \$2 billion. The company owns some 22 businesses including insurance agencies, recycling companies, construction firms, Web developers, grocery stores and others.

"This move will enable us to finance further expansion under the Cohen's umbrella, both within the markets in which we currently operate as well as into new territories across the country, as



The exterior of a Cohen's Optical store in the Queens Center Mall in Queens, N.Y.

opportunities permit," Cohen said. "This acquisition truly marks a milestone in the 80-year-plus history of our company."

Said Jimmie Gipson, chairman of Houchens, "The acquisition represents an opportunity to further diversify our business operations into a new area and territory." Spencer Coates, the company's president, said Houchens "is excited to be working with Cohen management

and looks forward to them continuing to manage and grow the business."

Cohen, who will continue in his current role directing and overseeing daily operations of the business, along with Cohen's Fashion Optical's current management team, pointed out that Cohen's has experienced record double-digit sales gains in the past several years.

"We have been outpacing the industry. We believe that our proven market positioning, the strength of our advertising and marketing and the commitment of our franchisee owners has contributed to our success and there is great opportunity in the market today to build upon that," Cohen said.

The purchase covers 106 franchised Cohen's stores in the Northeast and Florida, primarily in the greater New York/New Jersey area. Of those, the Cohen family is retaining 30 franchised optical locations, consisting of 14 Cohen's Fashion Optical locations as well as 16 General Vision Services (GVS) stores.

Most of the GVS stores will be converted to the Cohen's Fashion Optical format, a process that has already begun with the conversion of four GVS stores to date, Cohen said. In addition, Cohen's has opened three new stores this year, including one in Puerto Rico and two in Massachusetts; another in Fairfield, Conn., will open next month and more locations are being explored in New York City and other markets, for a total of about 10 this year, he noted.

"By 2009, we should be expanding at the rate of about 25 stores per year," according to Cohen.

The 106 stores generated sales of approximately \$115 million in 2007, Cohen said. The terms of the cash deal were undisclosed.

The Cohen's chain was launched in 1924 with a single optical store in New York City; it began franchising in 1978. Prior to the Houchens acquisition, Cohen's Fashion Optical was owned by brothers Robert Cohen, OD, and Alan Cohen, OD.

The Cohen families also own General Vision Services; Alan Cohen is CEO of GVS and Jeffrey Cohen, Robert's son, is president.

Bob Cohen is also a shareholder of Sterling Optical parent Emerging Vision; Alan Cohen is chairman of that company's board. ■■

## Essilor Posts 8.1 Percent Revenue Gain in FY 2007

CHARENTON-LE-PONT, France—Essilor International (ESSI.PA) posted €2,908.1 million in consolidated revenue for the year ended Dec. 31, 2007, up 8.1 percent from year ago. On a like-for-like basis, revenue grew 8.0 percent, on a par with the previous year. Higher unit sales accounted for 5 percent of the increase, with an improved price-mix adding the other 3 percent.

Consolidation of companies acquired in 2006 and 2007 contributed 4 percent of reported growth. According to Essilor, the currency effect shifted to a sharply negative 3.8 percent, primarily due to the decline in the U.S. dollar and, to a lesser extent, the Canadian dollar, the Japanese yen and the British pound against the euro.

Contribution from operations was €527.4 million, or 18.1 percent of revenue, versus €482.6 million, or 17.9 percent of revenue, in 2006, up 9.3 percent. Operating profit for 2007 rose 9.6 percent to €504.6 million.

Essilor reported strong growth in

every region of the world. Sales in Europe grew 9.1 percent, or 6.2 percent like-for-like, to €1,317.5 million. In North America, sales reached €1,207.8 million, up 5.0 percent, or 8.1 percent like-for-like. Revenues in Asia-Pacific grew to €266.9 million, up 14.5 percent, or 13.4 percent like-for-like. In Latin America, sales rose to €109.5 million, an 18.6 percent increase, or 15.6 percent like-for-like.

Essilor attributed its growth to several key factors, most notably an improvement in the product mix led by firm growth in progressive lenses such as Varilux Physio, Definity, Anateo/Accolade), medium and high-index lenses, Transitions variable-tint lenses and anti-reflective coatings. Other factors included ongoing external growth, with the acquisition during the year of 16 new companies. Further profitability gains, with contribution from operations rising to 18.1 percent of revenue and profit attributable to equity holders reaching 12.6 percent. ■■

## Refac U.S. Vision Chain Takes Over Leased Optical in BJ's Wholesale

BLACKWOOD, N.J.—Refac Optical Group's U.S. Vision chain, which specializes in leased optical departments, is taking over the operation of 156 leased departments in BJ's Wholesale warehouse clubs, effective March 17.

The BJ's Optical departments were previously operated by Luxottica Group's Luxottica Retail division. Luxottica executives announced on Feb. 7 that the company would let its license agreement with Natick, Mass.-based BJ's lapse.

A spokesperson for BJ's told **VM** the optical departments were operated by Luxottica through March 15. "They all closed on the 16th to transition over to U.S. Vision, then reopen on March 17," she explained. The warehouse-club chain currently operates 177 BJ's Wholesale Clubs in 16 states; 156 of those clubs have optical.

During Luxottica's Investor Day program early last month, the positioning of the BJ's Wholesale optical departments was described as "not in alignment with the Licensed Brands strategy." According to Kerry Bradley, chief operating officer of Luxottica Retail, at that event, "It's a nice business, but not a major one for us."

Luxottica inherited the BJ's Wholesale lease agreement when it acquired Cole Vision and Cole's Licensed Brands operation in late 2004.

Dave Pierson, Refac Optical Group's president and chief executive officer, confirmed that this agreement represents U.S. Vision's first leased departments in a warehouse club host environment. The addition of the BJ's units brings Refac's store count to 678 locations, according to Pierson. ■■



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## NEWS VIEWS

# Hoya Vision Care Raises Its U.S. Profile

By Andrew Karp

Group Editor, Lenses and Technology

LEWISVILLE, Texas—Hoya Vision Care North America has long been recognized by U.S. eyecare professionals for its broad line of lens products and good value. Over the past decade, the Lewisville-based company, which is the North American arm of Japanese optical giant Hoya Vision Care, has enhanced its reputation with the introduction of advanced progressive lens designs, materials and coatings.

Although technological innovation continues to be Hoya's primary strength, the company has also developed its marketing capabilities. Over the past two years, Hoya has launched a series of high-visibility sales and marketing programs that have raised its U.S. profile significantly. Promotions such as the "My Big Fat Greek Hoya Getaway" sweepstakes, which earned winners a trip to Greece, and the "Go for the Green" promotion, which offered a grand prize of a Lexus GS 450h Hybrid with a two-year lease or \$30,000 cash, have boosted demand among eyecare professionals for Hoya's portfolio of high-performance lens products such as Hoyalux Summit ecp, Super HiVision, and Hoya Phoenix while building customer loyalty.

Although Hoya's parent company doesn't break out sales by region, its North American business is growing rapidly due to sales increases by Hoya's U.S. lab network as well as its wholesale and retail customers. According to **VM's Top Labs Report**, Hoya Vision Care labs generated net Rx sales of \$200 million in 2007, a 19.1 percent increase over 2006.

To find out what's driving Hoya's recent growth surge, **VM** recently spoke with Barney Dougher, president of Hoya Vision Care North America, at Hoya's corporate headquarters near Dallas.

**VM: Over the past year-and-a-half, Hoya Vision Care North America has experienced explosive growth. According to Vision Monday's Top Labs report, your lab business alone grew by \$40 million dollars in 2007. What are the key factors igniting the growth?**

**Barney Dougher:** One of the greatest things we've ever done is actually creating a brand in this country. We're the only people with Phoenix—our Trivex material. Hoya created that brand.



Barney Dougher, president of Hoya Vision Care North America.

That's always been something Hoya's been very good at. If you go back 20 years, they were able to create products the customers wanted. Super HiVision—a great product. Independent studies say it's the best AR in the marketplace. Forty percent of every product we make has AR coating on it.

Hoya free-form design has had phenomenal growth just in the last seven months that we've been manufacturing it in this country. Prior [to that time], we had phenomenal growth on our original iD design, which was the only design of its type in the world. It's processed in Germany. But today, because we can process it in the U.S.—we process a version of their product—it just continues to skyrocket.

The Summit line has been exceptional all the way through and that product line has now surpassed our GP Wide product line. It consists of the original Summit CD and Summit ECP. The free-form or the Lifestyle iD, is now growing at a phenomenal pace.

**VM: In the last two years, Hoya has made a lot more noise in the marketplace through marketing programs such as giveaways, spiffs and trips. How did Hoya evolve into a marketing-driven company?**

**Dougher:** We've Americanized the marketing of Hoya. Hoya's always been technically advanced, and because of that, there's a lot of substance behind our marketing.

We may not have the longevity locally that our competitors have selling some of these products, but worldwide we do. Worldwide, we have the most longevity of anybody selling AR coated products on non-mineral materials. We were the founders. Hoya started putting

AR coatings on CR-39 [monomer by PPG] lenses way before anybody else did. We just didn't do it here.

Today, Hoya's got seven years of history in this country. They had to push their technology in the U.S. market. When Hoya bought the ORI group, most people here didn't know we make a progressive lens, and we make one of the best in the world. [The ORI group consisted of several major wholesale labs whose purchase marked

Hoya's entry into the U.S. lab business in 2000.] Hoya had the lab in Bethel, Conn., which was growing, but they didn't have the umbrella of all these locations out there to promote the fact that we had the thinnest material in the world, and the best AR coating with index matching, the 1.70 material, and a true 1.6 material that's one millimeter thick and will pass drop ball. They needed a way to tell the market they had this. So they went out and got themselves some laboratories. I happened to own one of those [labs] they bought.

**VM: If you buy a Hoya product from a Hoya lab, will the end result be better than if you were to get a Hoya product from, let's say, a Zeiss lab, because of Hoya's innate understanding of that product?**

**Dougher:** No. Hoya lens product and designs have built in quality, so it really makes no difference who produces the lenses. AR coatings, on the other hand, are different due to our patented substrate matching process. My laboratory division makes substrate-matched AR coatings. So if I'm making a Shamir product, I'm still substrate-matching that product. If it's Essilor, it's substrate-matched. There are economic efficiencies when you can do those things, but the quality I don't believe is different. We deal by a set of standards. Those products don't deviate, whether it's my product or a Shamir product or it's an Essilor product. If I can make that product using substrate matching, if it's available, that's what I'll do. It's a repeatable function. It goes right in the same process with the other brands.

If a non-Hoya lab makes a Hoya product, I believe they have a technologically advanced product, even when they are

making it in their own lab, or non-Hoya facility. The lens design and the composition of the material are built in.

**VM: If you look around at other industries—or even in our industry—you see Japanese companies usually use a lot of home office people to look after their U.S. operations. Hoya made a change. What effect did that have?**

**Dougher:** Mr. [Gerry] Bottero [president of Hoya Vision Care, global] was the first American to run a global division of Hoya. That was a more significant change than me becoming head of the North American business.

The fact of the matter is that Hoya, historically, has always had somebody from the local country they're operating in running the company. You'd go to Germany, and a German man ran the division. You'd go to Sweden, a Swedish guy ran it. The only people in the U.S. that are Japanese are technical people, because we have to have them, it's an absolute. I also have one financial person who's Japanese. That's really it. And that's the way it's been at Hoya. It's a world economy, so you've got different people running parts of businesses.

**VM: You are the first president of the Optical Laboratories Association who is also president of a major lens manufacturer and lab operator. How are you balancing those two responsibilities?**

**Dougher:** I have some great support people at Hoya and the OLA and my duties at Hoya come first, but the OLA is important to all of us that operate labs. They are the true voice of lab operators and I am proud to be able to represent Hoya and my colleagues in the industry to support the needs of lab operators, all sizes small, medium and large. The OLA is changing. The original bylaws were written back around 1972. The organization is not just pure wholesalers anymore. So we've been working on revamping the bylaws. We're voting on it right now. We're in the process of redefining what a laboratory is. It's a changing of the board and the bylaws of the board as far as what makes up a laboratory, and how the dues are structured. So it's changing the bylaws to reflect the needs of the industry today.

—With contributions from Bill Scott, VP/VM Group Publisher



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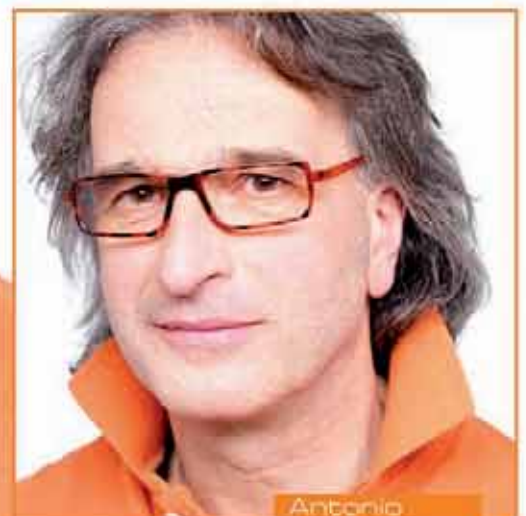
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## NEWS VIEWS

# CIBA's New CEO, Andrea Saia, Eyes CL Growth



Newly named CIBA Vision CEO Andrea Saia (c) chats with CIBA's Francesco Balestrieri (l), president, North America, and Rick Weisbarth, OD, VP/global head of professional development and partnerships.

ATLANTA—Despite the country's current economic uncertainty, prospects for contact lens sales look bright for the next five years, according to Andrea Saia, who last month was named chief executive officer of CIBA Vision, the eyecare unit of Novartis. CIBA also unveiled a new corporate logo and slogan in late February.

On Feb. 28, Saia, CIBA's chief operating officer since May 2007, succeeded Michael Kehoe as the company's CEO. She said CIBA is projecting worldwide growth of 6 percent for the total contact

lens category over the next five years. Saia also targeted the U.S. CL business at 6 percent growth for the same period, while predicting five-year sales gains for CLs of 4.5 percent in Europe, 3 percent in Japan and 11 percent in the key emerging markets.

"The daily disposable and silicone hydrogel segments have been showing the lion's share of growth, and we expect that to continue," she noted, adding, "CIBA Vision believes silicone hydrogel will grow to become the world's most important contact lens material over the next few years."

Asked how the slowdown in the U.S. economy might affect 2008's CL business, Saia told *VM* she remains optimistic about the category for the year ahead, noting, "It looks like this year has already gotten off to a good start."

"2008 is starting off strong," agreed Francesco Balestrieri, CIBA's president, North America. After a slowdown in CL sales early in 2007's fourth quarter, volume picked up in December and January, he said: "Looking ahead, we are cau-



tious, but optimistic because contact lenses are seen by consumers less and less as a luxury product and more as a basic need. The U.S. is the fastest-growing market worldwide, so if in the short term the economy will not allow the same growth rates as the last four months, it's still an exciting market."

CIBA hopes its new Air Optix for Astigmatism contact lens, rolling out in the U.S. in mid-April after its introduction in Europe last October, will help generate more excitement. Balestrieri noted that the product has been tested by 900 U.S. practitioners, after two years of market tests in France. He said the Air Optix brand will also be used on CIBA's silicone hydrogel CLs in the future.

Last month, CIBA also unveiled a

new corporate logo and slogan, redesigning the logo that has remained relatively unchanged since the company was founded in 1980 and establishing a new purpose statement: "Shared Passion for Healthy Vision and Better Life."

The first product to carry the new logo will be the upcoming Air Optix for Astigmatism CL; CIBA plans a full transition to the new corporate identity by the end of 2009, said Rick Weisbarth, OD, vice president/global head of professional development and partnerships.

During SECO International, CIBA also announced the launch of a new education initiative—the First Practice Academy—targeting independent optometrists in private practice for three years or less. The program, developed in conjunction with Essilor of America, is endorsed by the American Optometric Association. (See the March 31 issue of *VM* for details.)

—Cathy Ciccolella

## Shamir Appoints Hayardeny as President and CEO

KIBBUTZ SHAMIR, Israel—Shamir Optical Industry (Nasdaq: SHMR), based here, has appointed Eyal Hayardeny as its president and chief executive officer, effective April 2, 2008. Hayardeny, who currently serves as Shamir's executive vice president and vice president of business development, replaces Giora Ben-Ze'ev, who shall continue to serve the company as vice chairman of the board of directors and as director of strategic projects.

Hayardeny joined Shamir as an executive vice president and vice president of business development in 2005. From 1994 to 1998, he worked at Somekh Chaikin's (KPMG) economic department. From 1991 to 1994, he served as a budget officer in the IDF's chief of staff financial consultant unit. He holds a BA degree in accounting and economics and an MBA degree from the Bar-Ilan University.

"We are delighted that Eyal has agreed to serve as Shamir's new president and chief executive officer. His experience will enhance our team and provide strong continuity during this transition. Over the recent years, Eyal

has proven himself an invaluable member of our group's efforts. His intimate knowledge of Shamir will help support our continuing efforts to expand our footprint worldwide," said Uzi Tzur, the chairman of Shamir's board of directors.

Tzur added, "We would like to thank Mr. Giora Ben-Ze'ev for his significant contributions to Shamir during more than 30 years with Shamir. We greatly appreciate his efforts, especially his guidance through Shamir's IPO and listing on NASDAQ. We are pleased that Mr. Ben-Ze'ev has agreed to continue his contribution to our operation as vice chairman of the board of directors and as director of strategic projects of Shamir."

Shamir's audit committee and board of directors have approved the appointment of Ben-Ze'ev as vice chairman of the board of directors and as director of strategic projects of Shamir, subject to the approval of the general meeting of Shamir's shareholders.

For a look at Shamir's complete fourth quarter and 2007 results, see sidebar this page. ■

## Shamir Posts 11.9 Percent Gain in 4Q '07 Net Income

KIBBUTZ SHAMIR, Israel—In unaudited financial results for the fourth quarter and year ended Dec. 31, 2007, Shamir Optical Industry Ltd. (Nasdaq: SHMR) reported a 20.3 percent increase in revenues, to \$30.6 million, compared to revenues of \$25.4 million for the fourth quarter of 2006. Gross profit for the quarter was \$17.4 million, or 56.7 percent of revenues, compared to gross profit of \$13.3 million, or 52.4 percent of revenues for the same period last year.

For the fourth quarter of 2007, operating income rose 112.9 percent to \$2.7 million, or 8.8 percent of revenues, compared to operating income of \$1.3 million, or 5.0 percent of revenues for the same period last year.

Net income for the fourth quarter increased 11.9 percent to \$1.6 million, compared to net income of \$1.4 million, for the comparable period in 2006.

Excluding the effects of non-cash stock-based compensation expenses for the fourth quarter of 2007, operating income increased 88.0 percent to \$3.0 million, or 9.8 percent of revenues, compared to operating income of \$1.6 million, or 6.2 percent of revenues, for the

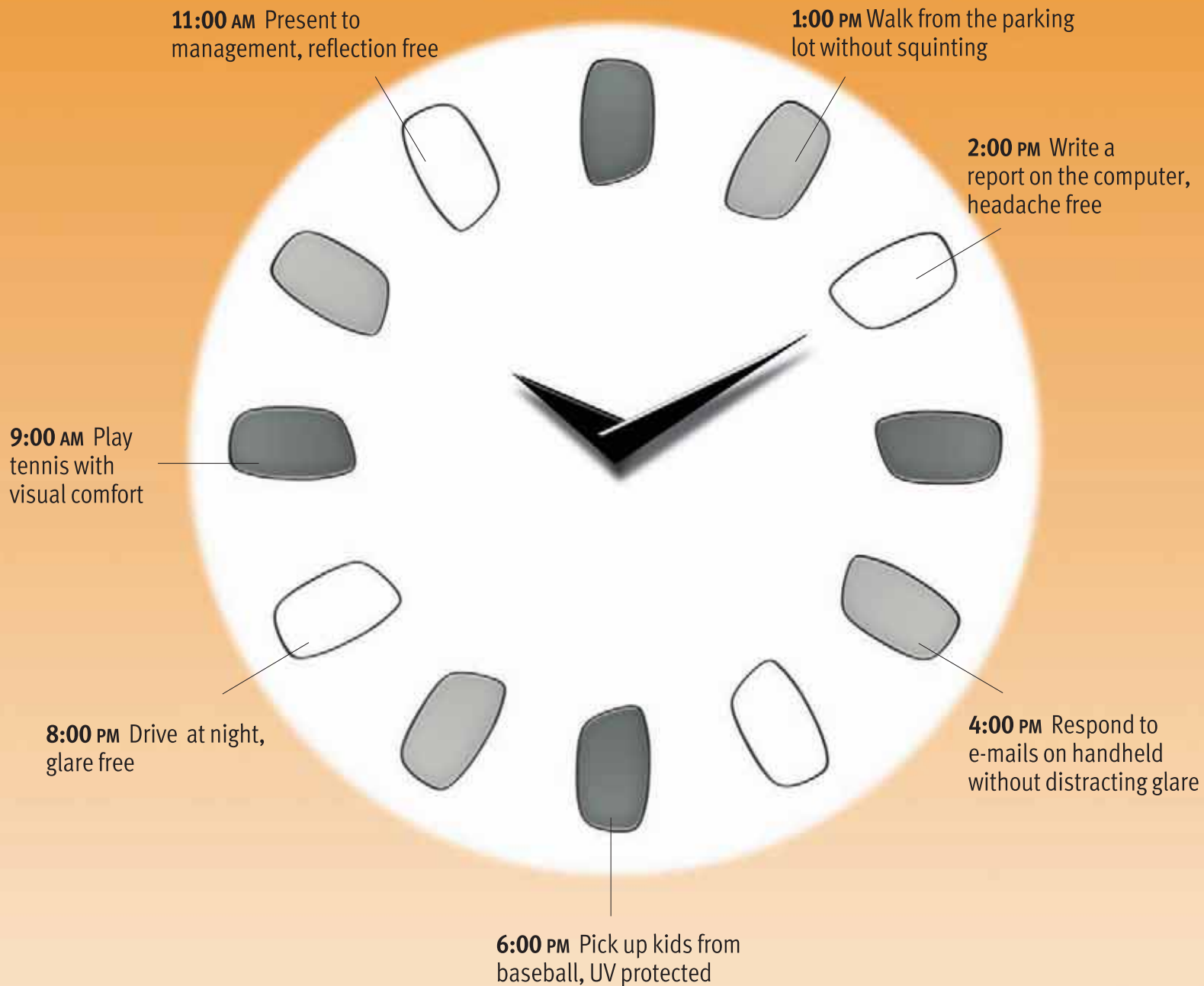
same period last year.

Excluding the effect of non-cash stock-based compensation expenses and valuation allowance provided on deferred tax assets, net of minority interest, the net income for the quarter increased 41.2 percent to \$2.4 million, compared to \$1.7 million for the comparable period in 2006. For 2007, revenues increased 23.8 percent to \$120.4 million, compared to revenues of \$97.3 million for the same period of 2006. Gross profit for the year increased 21.3 percent to \$64.6 million, or 53.6 percent of revenues, compared to a gross profit of \$53.2 million, or 54.7 percent of revenues for the same period last year.

Operating income for 2007 increased 67.9 percent to \$11.9 million, or 9.9 percent of revenues, compared to operating income of \$7.1 million, or 7.3 percent of revenues for the same period last year. Net income for the year was \$8.2 million, an increase of 27.0 percent compared to net income of \$6.5 million for the comparable period in 2006.

"Throughout 2007, Shamir made considerable operational progress in each of its markets," said CEO Giora Ben-Ze'ev. ■





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## NEWSMAKERS

# Charmant Celebrates 25 Years in the U.S.



Left to right, Charmant USA's Dee Berguys, Harry Aida, Jean Simone, Dennis Davis, Takeshi Tanaka and William Ferraro showcase the company's new corporate logo.

MORRIS PLAINS, N.J.—This year marks Charmant's 25th anniversary in the U.S, two years after the Japan-based Charmant Group celebrated its 50th anniversary for frame manufacturing.

Kaoru Horikawa, the founder and group chairman, built the company "on the core foundation of the pursuit of the highest standards in manufacturing and a firm belief that quality had to have a much more meaningful benefit to the retailer and the consumer in order provide them a greater economical benefit, the company said.

According to Harry Aida, president of Charmant USA, the focus on quality continues to be a trait the company honors even through its continuous growth. "Mr. Horikawa has always believed that quality makes things happen," said Aida. "Our priority has always been providing quality products and that will never change."

Horikawa established Charmant to sell directly to retailers on an international level and realized early on that the company needed to establish itself in the biggest market in the world, the U.S., in order to deliver its message. The U.S was the first subsidiary set up by Horikawa for international sales. With Japanese manufacturing just beginning to establish credibility for unique metal capabilities, Charmant in the 1980s was the first company

in Japan to perfect the manufacturing of titanium frames and the company brought this new material to the U.S. market in 1990/91, Aida noted.

Today, Charmant's products are sold in 100 countries and the company runs 10 subsidiaries around the world. The company estimates that it is one of the largest frame suppliers in the American market, with sales in the U.S. comprising

roughly 25 percent of the group's sales, sales within Europe contributing 30 percent and business throughout Asia and other markets at 45 percent of total revenues.

Selling directly to the retailers meant Charmant needed a strong, knowledgeable sales force that could deliver, something just as important to the company as producing quality frames. "One of our best strengths is our sales force. Where we look at quality in terms of our product, we also look at quality as far as our salespeople and how

they service the accounts," said Dennis Davis, vice president of sales for Charmant USA. "We feel like there is

a perfect combination, you put the right product and the right person's hand and there is going to be success."

Charmant USA currently has about 70 sales reps in the U.S. overseen by Davis, while key accounts and sales in Latin and Central America are overseen by Jean Simone, director of special sales.

In addition to its sizeable Japanese-made products—and Japan remains an important cornerstone of innovations technically for the company today—Charmant established Chinese produc-

**"We take great pride in the quality of our products, the quality of our service and the quality of our people. We are proud of what we have achieved, and confident in our future."**

—Harry Aida



tion and augmented its selection of products with a range of frames under the Aristar banner. "It was, and still is, an affordable, good quality product from the Far East and the best quality for the price," Davis noted.

"Our approach is to focus on the needs of the customer and trying to offer them a one-stop shop with variety in the product mix," added Aida.

The company's portfolio and sustained growth in the U.S. market has been expanded with other Charmant house collections, such as CFX, or Concept Flex, Charmant's memory metal launched in October 2005 and one of the best initial launches the company has had, Aida pointed out.

Nodoka, launched in March 2007, is an elaborate line, influenced heavily by Japanese design and color. The company also produces the eponymous Christian Roth collection for the fashion market.

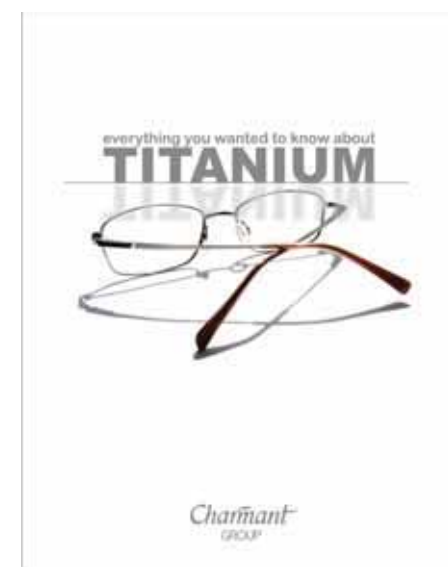
"Aristar is a huge unit number for us," said Davis. "It's a great product and unmatched quality for the price point. But our foundation is Charmant Titanium. We've built a solid company on the fact that the titanium product is great quality and a product that fits."

"It is one of the few collections that gets placed in regional chains that's not a brand," added Simone. "It is easy for us to get our Charmant Titanium placed because of the quality and the type of material and how we have marketed it over the years that it seems to identify as a brand in its own right."

"They are two of the most successful house collections in the industry," stated Aida. "They are the most important areas that we push, we have been for 25 years and that will never change."

The company's involvement in licensed brands has also grown over the years. These include Elle, which has been one of the company's strongest and most consistent brands for many years; Esprit, with a younger and more unisex target; and the latest edition, Lacoste, launched in July 2006, which exceeded

Charmant's six-month sale projections within its first month and a half and set every record for an initial launch ever for the company.



The new titanium training manual for sales reps and accounts helps position the premium material.

And the future brings even bigger things for Charmant USA. "Titanium will remain a focus for us, it is something that this year we are even putting more emphasis on," continued Davis. "Charmant is known for titanium, we know that's our strength and we are re-emphasizing it to tie in with our 25 years. We've created a new educational booklet for the accounts and the reps to re-educate them on it and we're looking to do an ABO-certified seminar on it."

Additionally, the Morris Plains headquarters is undergoing a total renovation, the corporate logo has been updated and modernized, the company's Web site is being redone to include more educational information and new merchandising materials are being made available, including an interactive "Take the Titanium Challenge" frame display featuring a built in digital scale so customers can compare the weights of titanium frames versus other heavier metal frames.

To really commemorate this achieve-

*Continued on page 16*



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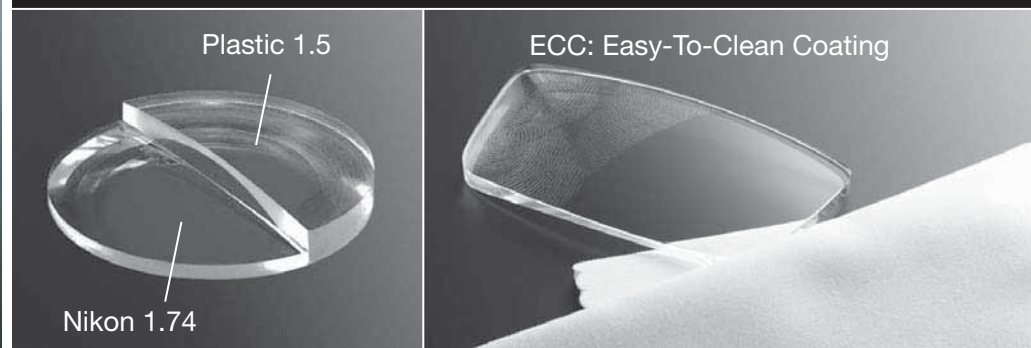
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## Fed Appeals Court Rules VSP Not Entitled to 'Tax-Exempt' Status

### Not-for-profit corporation to appeal

RANCHO CORDOVA, Calif.—A federal appeals court, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, ruled late in January that Vision Service Plan (VSP), a not-for-profit corporation, does not qualify for exemption under Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c) (4) noting that the organization, formed to provide vision care services to subscribers with whom it contracts, “is not primarily engaged in promoting social welfare and does not, therefore, qualify for a federal tax exemption.” The appeals court sided with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and affirmed a December 2006 federal trial court decision.

Rob Lynch, president and CEO of VSP Vision Care, said in statement, “The court's determination calls into question the tax-exempt status of all not-for-profit organizations with a membership structure, including other healthcare delivery systems and educational institutions. VSP provides vision care benefits to its members under a similar delivery model as other tax-exempt health plans such as Kaiser and Delta Dental. We are taking the appropriate steps to appeal this ruling and look forward to an opportunity to communicate our position.”

A VSP spokesperson also told *VM*, “VSP will continue to operate as a not-for-profit organization with or without the tax exemption. Any excess revenues will continue to be used to further the health of the community through charity care, patient education, peer review, quality assurance, and patient satisfaction programs. There will be no service disruptions or gap in care since we are a financially sound company and VSP providers will not be affected by our tax-exempt status.”

Although the trial court also cited concerns that VSP did not qualify for tax-exempt status because it operated in

ways characteristic of for-profit organizations, the Ninth Circuit declined to consider this basis of that court's decision.

The ruling came following oral arguments held in December 2007, at which time attorneys representing VSP argued that it was entitled to recover taxes it paid in 2003 because it served substantial numbers of individuals eligible for Medicare and Medicaid and provided vision care services that for-profit insurers did not even offer.

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

Providing more background to *VM* in this case, VSP noted that in a decision in 2002, effective Jan. 1, 2003, the IRS revoked VSP's tax exempt status after reviewing VSP's finances and operations for the years 1996-98. The company has been filing tax returns and paying taxes since that time.

In March 2004, VSP filed a claim for a refund with the IRS and after six months of not receiving a response, commenced the action in U.S. District Court to obtain a refund of taxes paid. In December 2005, both VSP and the U.S. brought cross-motions for summary judgment; a court order on Dec. 12, 2005 denied VSP's motion for summary judgment, granted the U.S. government's motion and dismissed the complaint. VSP appealed that decision in January 2006 to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit. Oral argument was heard on Dec. 5, 2007. On Jan. 30, the Ninth Circuit affirmed the U.S. district court's decision.

The VSP spokesperson said, “We have filed a request for reconsideration to the Ninth Circuit. A full panel of this court can look at the case again, the decision could stand, or we could choose to pursue this case by a further appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.” ■

## Charmant Celebrates 25 Years in the U.S.

*Continued from page 14*

ment in style, a dinner cruise around the Statue of Liberty for 200 of Charmant USA's employees and customers during Vision Expo East will celebrate the anniversary and ring in the next era, while plans for a national sales meeting at the end of the year will also mark the occasion. “It is really something we will be promoting throughout the year,” added Davis. “And the majority of our programs will be tied into the anniver-

sary for the rest of the year.”

But ultimately it is Charmant's customers who will reap the benefits of this milestone, Charmant's U.S. team points out. “Our customers know they can rely on us because of the satisfaction we provide. We take great pride in the quality of our products, the quality of our service and the quality of our people. We are proud of what we have achieved, and confident in our future,” concluded Aida. ■



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## NEWS VIEWS

## Gerber Coburn Appoints Alex Incera GM



Alex Incera

SOUTH WINDSOR, Conn.—Gerber Coburn, a unit of Gerber Scientific, has appointed Alex Incera as general manager. In this role, Incera will be responsible for the unit's worldwide business operations.

Incera joined the business unit as project manager in 1995 and was promoted to director of engineering in 1996. In 1999 he became vice president of engineering, leading the research and development efforts of such products as the Eclipse Surface Blocker and DTL Generator. He was appointed executive director of marketing in 2006.

"We are pleased to promote Alex to the position of general manager. Alex has made significant contributions to Gerber Coburn's new product development,

marketing and strategic planning efforts. His experience in the industry combined with his technical expertise and commitment to service make him the ideal candidate for this role," said Stephen Lovass, Gerber Coburn president.

Lovass will remain president of Gerber Coburn, senior vice president of Gerber Scientific and has also assumed the role of president of Gerber Scientific Products, a business unit serving the sign making industry. ■

### New York Children's Vision Coalition to Honor Vistakon's Kelman



Naomi Kelman

NEW YORK—The New York Children's Vision Coalition plans to honor Naomi Kelman, president, Vistakon Americas, at the group's annual optical industry gala in April.

The Vision Coalition's goal is to facilitate comprehensive eyecare for all children in New York through awareness-building, advocacy and accessibility via the group's mobile vision van.

The event honoring Kelman with the Optical Leadership Award will be held April 9 from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at The Harvard Club.

For more information, contact Rosemary Clemens, executive director/CEO at (212) 997-3550 or email, rosemaryclemens@aol.com. ■

## Italian Eyewear and Sunwear Exports Rise in 9 Months of '07

SHANGHAI—Against the backdrop of the Shanghai Optical fair here and with the Euro at its highest levels versus the U.S. dollar, Italian eyewear exports are up for the first 9 months of 2007, according to ANFAO, the Italian manufacturers' association, which reported more than 61 million pairs of eyewear exported during the period.

Italian eyewear exports rose 14.2 percent in the first 9 months of 2007 compared to the same period in 2005, up by 5.4 percent compared to 2006, while exports to the U.S. for the period rose 7.9 percent over the prior year, according to ANFAO's figures.

In terms of overall performance, sunglass exports rose highest, by 15.6 percent, passing the €1.136 billion mark while exports of optical frames posted an 11.1 percent increase, valued at more than €548 million.

Imports into Italy also rose overall by

8.4 percent, totaling €509 million for the first 9 months of 2007, the statement said.

Also citing opportunities in the growing China and Asian markets, the report noted that during the first 9 months of 2007, 13.5 percent of total exports of Italian eyewear frames/sunglasses were directed to Asia, with an 11.5 percent increase over the same period in 2006, exceeding €226 million.

Overall, China currently ranks 20th for exports of Italian eyewear frames and sunglasses, equal to about €20 million in the first 9 months of 2007. "This market share is definitely still small, but the growth rates and potential of the area are very promising," the report said.

Central Asia also posted healthy performance levels with an increase of 36.8 percent for the January-September 2007 period.

The report also cited Italian eyewear's business with Central and Southern America where exports leaped 42.7 percent. ■

### GE Healthcare Partners With ELOA

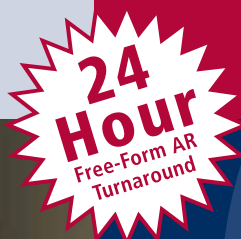
DALLAS—Essilor Laboratories of America (ELOA) is partnering with GE Healthcare Financial Services to offer eyecare professionals financial services.

"We are excited to be partnering with Essilor, the optometric industry leader, to support their customer's growth needs with financing options," said Catherine Estrampes, general manager for GE Healthcare Financial Services' vendor and practice solutions team. "We are pleased to provide creative financing solutions to help eyecare professionals meet their business objectives and satisfy their customer's vision care needs."

The new Essilor Laboratories of America Growth Financing Program, with financing from GE Healthcare Financial Services, offers equipment financing; practice expansion with options for construction costs, working capital and leasehold improvements; and line of credit solutions. In addition, clients receive "rewards"—a quarterly credit on their lab bill based on such variables as the annual growth of the practice and the amount borrowed under the financing program.

"We are delighted that GE Healthcare Financial Services has tailored a solution to fit the needs of our customers—eyecare professionals who continually strive to provide state-of-the-art eye services," said Réal Goulet, president, Essilor Laboratories of America, Inc. ■

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## NEWS VIEWS

## OWA to Honor De Long With Pleiades Award

DALLAS, Texas—The Optical Women's Association (OWA) will honor Stephanie K. De Long, editor-in-chief of Eyecare Business, as this year's recipient of the group's 9th annual Pleiades Award. This award will be presented by the OWA on Friday April 11 at its annual networking event.

De Long, with 22 years experience in the industry, has been editor-in-chief of Eyecare Business, a Pa.-based Wolters Kluwer publication, since 1990. She is a founding Board member of the OWA, a

member of The Vision Council's Strategic Communications Committee, and is a recipient of the OLA's Directors' Choice Award and Folio's Editorial Excellence Award. She is also a frequent speaker at International Vision Expos.

Before entering optical, De Long was a business writer, editor, and contributor to a variety of consumer and business publications, including Madison Avenue, Manhattan Inc., Management Technology, and the Newark Star Ledger. She was also co-owner and

operator of an award-winning restaurant in Rye, New York.

De Long is a graduate of Wells College in Aurora, N.Y., and began her career as a public relations writer for IBM.

The Pleiades Award spotlights an individual who has shown commitment to the mission of the OWA by fostering the growth of women in the industry. This award is named for the star cluster Pleiades in the Taurus constellation. The Pleiades is also known as the "Seven Sisters" referring to the seven

brightest stars in the cluster.

The OWA networking event and presentation of the Pleiades Award will be held at the Marchon showroom, 8 West 40th Street (between 5th and 6th Avenues). Festivities begin at 6 p.m., with the award presentation at 6:45 p.m.

The invitation to attend this event is extended to both OWA members and non-members. Please RSVP by March 31, 2008 at [www.opticalwomen.com/pleiades08\\_registration.shtml](http://www.opticalwomen.com/pleiades08_registration.shtml) or fax to (972) 490-4219. ■



Jerry Hayes, OD

NEW YORK—The UJA-Federation of New York's Optical Division will honor Jerry Hayes, OD, at its upcoming annual event in New York on Thursday, April 10, during the weekend of Vision Expo East.

## Jerry Hayes, OD to be Honored by UJA-Federation

Hayes started Hayes Marketing in 1981 and founded the HMI Buying Group in 1983. He also founded Hayes Consulting, E-dr. and his latest venture, Red Tray. Known for his lectures and articles on the business side of private practice, Hayes is also the founder of the Hayes Center for Practice Excellence at Southern College of Optometry (SCO) in Memphis, Tennessee.

Hayes, a graduate of SCO, opened his first office in Vicksburg, Miss. He recently finished an eight-year term on the board of trustees for the school, where he served as vice chairman. Active in his state association, Jerry served on the board of directors of the Mississippi Optometric Association and was chairman of the West Central Optometric Society for three years.

The UJA-Federation of New York's optical division will host the event for Hayes at the Marriott Marquis Hotel's Marquis Ballroom in New York City on April 10. Cocktails will start at 6 p.m.; the Program starts at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$225. For further information or to make reservations, please contact Steven Klein at (212) 836-1188 or [kleins@ujafedny.org](mailto:kleins@ujafedny.org) ■

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## NEWS VIEWS

## Cooper Companies Names Head of CL Unit

PLEASANTON, Calif.—Health care products maker The Cooper Companies has appointed John A. Weber president of the CooperVision contact lens unit.

Weber previously served as president, Asia Pacific since April and vice president, worldwide manufacturing and distribution of CooperVision from January 2005 to March 2007.

Commenting on the appointment, Robert S. Weiss, Cooper's chief executive officer, said, "John brings extensive world-

**"John brings extensive worldwide operational experience to his new role. With his background and experience within CooperVision, he is ideally suited to continue driving our success."**

**—Robert Weiss, Cooper Cos.**

wide operational experience to his new role. With his background and experience within CooperVision, he is ideally suited to continue driving our success."

Previously, the CooperVision employee reporting lines were split between Cooper Companies' CEO Weiss and CFO Steven M. Neil, who left the company earlier this month, according to a spokesperson for The Cooper Companies.

The Cooper Companies, Inc. manufactures and markets specialty healthcare products through its CooperVision and CooperSurgical units. Corporate offices are in Pleasanton, Calif.

CooperVision develops, manufactures and markets a broad range of contact lenses for the worldwide vision correc-

tion market. Also headquartered here, it manufactures in Juana Diaz, Puerto Rico, Norfolk, Va., Rochester, N.Y., Adelaide, Australia, Hamble and Hampshire, England and Madrid, Spain. ■

## Kodak, Signet Armorlite Extend Brand Licensing

SAN MARCOS, Calif.—Signet Armorlite (SA) has extended its international licensing agreement with Eastman Kodak, allowing the lens maker to continue using the Kodak brand through 2014.

Under the Kodak brand, SA manufactures several progressive lenses, such as the Kodak Precise Lens and the new Kodak Unique Lenses that incorporate digital backside lens technology. SA also offers two anti-reflective coating options under the Kodak banner—Kodak CleAR Lens Coating and the newly introduced Kodak Clean'N'Clear Lens Coating that offers a slicker, yet edgeable coating with anti-static properties.

"SA has enjoyed our long relationship with Kodak," remarked Bruno Salvadori, SA CEO and president. "We are pleased to offer a diversity of quality Kodak branded products that incorporate cutting-edge technology. And, of course, our products benefit from the Kodak name which is respected worldwide as a leader in imaging innovation."

According to SA executives, consumer awareness for Kodak lens products is growing with the advent of advertising campaigns linked to the growing European network of Kodak Lens Vision Centres. ■

## Rodenstock Group Names Littmann as Interim CEO, Reports Departure of Galli

MUNICH and FRANKFURT, Germany—Rodenstock Group said that CEO Dr. Giancarlo Galli has left the company "due to differing views relating to the future development of the business."

The company said that Littmann, a former member of the supervisory board of Rodenstock, will assume Dr. Galli's duties and responsibilities in the interim. The company stated, "Prof. Littmann has agreed to continue to provide comprehensive support for the implementation of the company's growth strategy until the selection of an external successor has been completed."

The temporary appointment of Littmann has been endorsed by Bridgepoint, the European private equity firm and majority shareholder in the Rodenstock Group, which invested in the company in March 2007.

The company noted that Littmann is highly experienced in the consumer goods industry and in the development

of high-quality brands. He is a former CEO and Chairman of Hugo Boss AG, among others, and is the founder and current president of the advisory board and CEO of Brandinsider GmbH, Hamburg, a consulting firm for brand strategies. He will be responsible for the overall management of the company, while Dr. Johannes Burtscher will continue to have responsibility for the finance, IT and human resources areas and Dr. Michael Kleer will stay in charge of operations.

Last month, Rodenstock GmbH and the North American optics distributor, Optical Distribution Corporation (ODC) finalized a long-term agreement for the exclusive distribution of the Rodenstock brand in the U.S. market and industry veteran Dave Delle Donne was named chief executive officer of ODC. The moves re-establish Rodenstock's presence in the U.S. following the collapse in 2005 of a U.S. manufacturing and distri-

bution venture in which it had a significant stake. At that time, Delle Donne told **Vision Monday**, "I look forward to re-establishing a premium brand like Rodenstock in the U.S. market with the support of Lazear Capital Partners, LTD and Rodenstock GmbH."

In its announcement about the interim CEO, Rodenstock Group in Germany said it would "continue its growth strategy with the expansion of its market leadership in the high-end sector, including further international expansion and selective diversification of its product portfolio to attract new customer groups. Rodenstock's market environment is driven by a number of factors including increased globalization, demographic and fashion trends. The trend towards fashion glasses and the potential in sports eyewear and [optical] sunglasses will also provide further development opportunities for Rodenstock." ■

## Viva Int'l Group Extends Worldwide License With Guess

SOMERVILLE, N.J.—Viva International Group has announced its re-commitment to the Guess by Marciano brand with a multi-year license extension.

The companies' licensing partnership originated in 1991, when Viva first introduced the Guess brand to the optical industry and Guess retail stores worldwide. Viva currently has the exclusive worldwide license to design, market and distribute the Guess optical and sunglass collection.

The extended license agreement, the company said, "enables Viva to heighten its investment with Guess through intensive advertising, the rollout of a new Guess booth at Vision Expo East in April and the development of innovative business and marketing opportunities for 2008."

Viva said it will also debut a new product assortment of trend-forward styles that will be available throughout its optical and sunglass channels, noting, "The Guess brand has been building momentum as the company continues to expand globally through its multiple retail concepts, including Guess stores, Marciano stores, accessories-only stores and G by Guess stores," according to the company.

"I'm very impressed with Paul's advocacy for his licensees and the Guess brand integrity," said Viva president and CEO Frank Rescigna, following a recent meeting with Paul Marciano, co-chairman and co-chief executive officer for Guess. Paul Marciano commented, "We are excited about Viva's new management team and their commitment to building a platform for substantial growth of the Guess eyewear business both domestically and internationally."

Established in 1978, as an entrepreneurial company, Viva International Group became a subsidiary of Highmark Vision Holding Company (HVHC, Inc) in February 2005. HVHC, Inc. consists of Viva Optique, Inc., Davis Vision, Inc. and Eye Care Centers of America. ■



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## NEWS VIEWS

# JMI Acquires Gerber Communications, PAA

NEW YORK—Jobson Medical Information LLC (JMI) has acquired Gerber Communications and Practice Advancement Associates (PAA).

Gerber and PAA are leading providers of custom publishing services and training and education programs for the ophthalmic marketplace. The acquisition expands JMI's ability to reach eyecare professionals with education and training programs, further enhancing the company's leadership position in the ECP market and building upon its existing assets, which include the **Review of Optome-**

**try, 20/20, Vision Monday** and **Frames Data** businesses. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

PAA creates and manages educational programs for ECPs that target the business side of the practice. PAA's initiatives include performance benchmark surveys, practice management Web site development, magazines and manuals focusing on management strategies and tactics, research services and educational seminars. Gerber Communications provides editorial services for major ophthalmic product manufacturers and pub-

lishes magazines targeting important segments of eyecare practitioners. Its publications include *Women in Optometry* (reaching all optometrists) and others published on behalf of sponsor companies, including *Corporate Optometry Reports* (reaching 7,000 optical chain optometrist affiliates), *Vision Source O.D.* (reaching 2,000 Vision Source member optometrists), *Foresight* (reaching 3,000 Wal-Mart-affiliated optometrists) and *ALLDOCs* (reaching 600 LensCrafters-affiliated optometrists).

"We are pleased to welcome Gerber Communications and Practice Advancement Associates into the JMI family," said Mike Tansey, CEO of JMI. "As established companies in the ophthalmic market with a solid client base, GC and PAA have promising growth potential. Their addition to JMI's portfolio will generate valuable synergies between our existing optical and ophthalmic business units, and further reinforce JMI's position as an innovative leader in healthcare publishing and communications." ■

## SAA to Hold 2008 Events

NEW YORK—Following the recent news of its merger with The Vision Council of America, executives at the Sunglass Association of America (SAA) are pursuing the organization's regular activities. Dave Bibbey, SAA president, who is now also a board member of the VCA, said the group's annual networking and professional events will proceed per usual this year.

Among the events is the May Mido Dinner, co-hosted by SAA with the European Sunglass Association (ESA), which will be held in Milan on Saturday, May 10. And the SAA's 36th annual meeting will take place in the Las Vegas area on Oct. 5 to 6, immediately following Vision Expo West.

"The recent membership vote that resulted in our merger with VCA opens new opportunities for us all at a challenging time in our industry's history,"

noted Bibbey, vice president of Zoom Eyeworks, adding, "Importantly, our daily operations—and membership benefits—remain unchanged, including our technical and legal committees. The need for this particular, specialized expertise in these critical areas has never been greater."

Acknowledging that the merger of the two groups was the result of years of discussion, Bibbey said, "Our association with VCA will offer powerful benefits to members of both organizations. The relationship between us has always been strong, and a formal 'union' will make us that much stronger. Together, we will total 322 companies and there is 'strength in numbers.' The creation of our Sunglass and Reading Glass Division of VCA will enable us to share resources and yet retain the independence and freedom for members to grow their businesses." ■

## Industry Veteran Gary McGaughey of ELOA Is Dead at 54



Gary McGaughey

PETALUMA, Calif.—Gary McGaughey of Essilor Laboratories of America died here on Feb. 17 after suffering a heart attack while playing golf. He was 54-years-old.

An optical industry veteran, McGaughey's optical career began in 1974 when he was hired as a lab tech by Katz and Klein in Monterey, Calif. He later spent time as the owner/operator of Gem Optical in Salinas, Calif., and as general manager of Martin Optical Service in Fresno and Empire Central Coast in Santa Maria.

McGaughey joined SOLA Optical

(now Carl Zeiss Vision) in 1996. He spent 11 years with the company, primarily in technical services focusing on lab issues. In 2007, he joined Essilor.

McGaughey was well known and respected in the optical laboratory community. An excellent golfer, he was much in demand at industry tournaments.

He is survived his father, Jack McGaughey, daughters Meghan Rockwell and Cristin Garcia, son Kevin McGaughey, grandchildren Mikayla Rockwell and Alexa Rockwell and brother Timothy McGaughey.

A memorial service for McGaughey took place on March 7, in Mission Memorial Park in Seaside, Calif. ■

## Services Held for Younger Optics' Co-Founder Grace Rips

TORRANCE, Calif.—Grace "Bebe" Rips, co-founder of Younger Optics, passed away on Feb. 20.

Rips worked closely with her husband Irving, to build Younger Optics from a backyard garage into a successful optical company employing nearly 1,000 people worldwide. She brought to the partnership strong business skills to complement her husband's creativity during her more than five decades with the company.

During 57 years of marriage, Rips raised three children, Ted, David and Debby, all of whom survive her. She is also survived by eight grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the Rips family suggests that donations be made in Bebe Rips' name to Hadassah Southern California (310) 276-0036. Funeral services were held at Mount Sinai Cemetery 5950 Forest Lawn Drive, Los Angeles on Feb. 22. ■

## Oliver Foot, President and Board Member for ORBIS Dies at 61



Oliver Foot

NEW YORK—The Honorable Oliver Foot, president and member of the board of directors for ORBIS International died unexpectedly on Feb. 6. He was 61 years old.

Foot was a long-time advocate of ORBIS having worked for the organization for 25 years. ORBIS International is a nonprofit humanitarian organization dedicated to saving sight worldwide.

"Oliver's passing is of enormous import to ORBIS as an organization but also to a great many of us as individuals. He gave so much of himself and was such a kind and generous spirit that he was loved all over the world. He certainly meant a lot to me as a mentor, boss, friend and brother—and I cannot imagine feeling any loss more deeply," said Geoffrey Holland, ORBIS executive director and chief executive officer.

Foot joined ORBIS as executive director in 1982 and was appointed pres-

ident in 1987. He was a member of the ORBIS International Board of Directors, as well as the boards of ORBIS Canada and ORBIS Taiwan. He also served as chairman of the ORBIS Charitable Trust in the United Kingdom.

Active with ORBIS since its founding 25 years ago, Oliver played a critical role in its development, fully devoting himself to its mission to eliminate avoidable blindness worldwide. He led the ORBIS team of volunteer doctors, nurses and aviators who flew to nearly 80 developing countries aboard the ORBIS Flying Eye Hospital, a specially equipped aircraft with state-of-the-art ophthalmic surgical and training facilities.

According to a statement from ORBIS, Foot once said, "ORBIS is at the heart of what life is all about—promoting cooperation and understanding through serving others. What better way could there be to help heal our divided world?"

Foot is survived by his wife, Gail; his two children, Mary-Rachel and Jesse; and three grandchildren. ■





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**Jim La Luzerne**

**Jim La Luzerne Retires From Essilor**  
DALLAS—Optical laboratory veteran Jim La Luzerne has retired from Essilor of America after serving for 12 years in a variety of management roles.

Prior to joining Essilor, La Luzerne served as president and CEO of WOS Optical, a wholesale lab located in Green Bay, Wis., where he started working during his high school and college days. While president and CEO of WOS Optical, La Luzerne also served as president and CEO of Global Optics and president of the Optical Laboratories Association.

In 1996, WOS Optical was purchased by Essilor of America and La Luzerne assumed the role of president, Essilor Laboratories of America.

He later served as vice president, e-business development including the early development of VisionWeb, which was then followed by his role as president of Optifacts. In 2005, La Luzerne was inducted into the Optical Laboratories Hall of Fame.

**See Worthy Expands U.S. Sales Team**  
TORONTO, Canada—See Worthy Inc., the U.S. and Canadian distributor of Sable WaterOptics products, have expanded their U.S. nationwide sales force to meet the company's expected growth.

Drew Eichelberger of Vision Products Southeast, LLC will represent the company in the Southeast. Eichelberger, an independent manufacturer representative, has been working in the optical industry since 1982 in various sales and sales management positions. His territory will include Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.

The team members of Midwest Optical Consultants, consisting of Greg Eifert, Jim Roussel, and Bob Burkhardt, bring more than 80 years of experience in the optical industry to their retailers. Their team will service the states of Missouri, Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, West Virginia and Western Pennsylvania.

Chris Foley of Vision Services, based in St. Cloud, Minn., has 16 years of experience in the vision industry at wholesale, retail and manufacturing levels. Foley's territory will cover Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota, Nebras-

ka, Douth Dakota and Wisconsin.

Innovative Visual Products will serve the Mid-South states of: Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Arkansas, New Mexico, Missouri and Kansas. Founder Scott Gaber and associates bring over 20 years of experience in the optical business—identifying cutting edge technology for emerging labs and retailers.

Wayne Parkola of Vision Products West has served the optical industry for over 25 years. His past work history includes positions in wholesale, retail, manufacturing, import/export, and warehousing. He will represent Sable WaterOptics in the states of California, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho, Wyoming and Hawaii.

Dick Paul, of Vision Products, Inc., has been a manufacturer rep for more than 25 years, covering the Northeast region of the U.S. He has been involved in introducing new technologies and products to the optical industry and has been active in consulting and marketing throughout all the optical channels. His sales region will cover Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and Eastern Pennsylvania.

“We're delighted to have such a talented team of sales professionals on board to tell the See Worthy story to eyecare professionals across the country said Nick Lantinga, vice president of Sales for See Worthy.

**Timothy Taft**

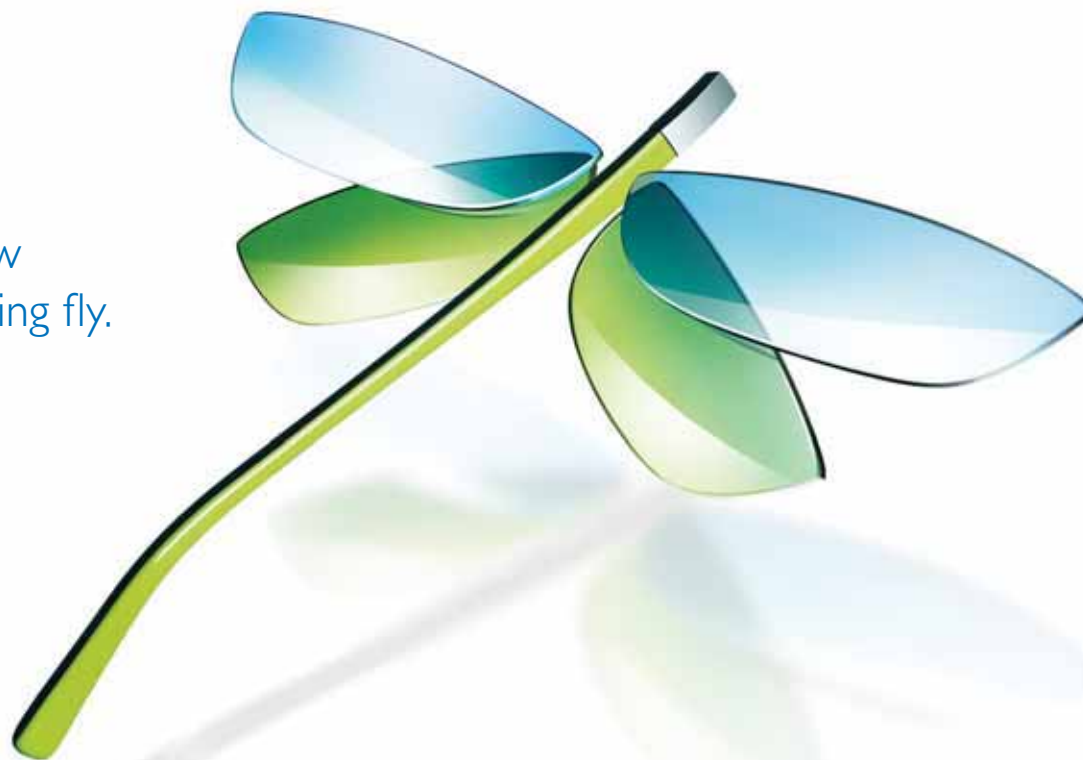
**Younger Optics Names Taft Territory Manager to the South**  
TORRANCE, Calif.—

Younger Optics has appointed Timothy Taft as territory manager to the southern states of Texas, Oklahoma and New Mexico.

He brings 15 years of experience in sales, and has spent the past five years in the optical industry. As territory manager, Taft will support Younger customers and assist in the education of industry professionals on the wide variety of Younger products available, such as NuPolar, Trilogy, IMAGE and the new Drivewear® lens.

“Tim has excellent management skills and a proven track record of building relationships that benefit the industry and our customers,” said David Rips, president and CEO of Younger Optics.

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## NEWS VIEWS

## Updated Environment, Sleeker Mix Drives SGH

By Marge Axelrad  
Editorial Director



Luxottica's Jack Krause: "We have an 'editorial' point of view."

NEW YORK—After undergoing a complete re-branding process which is reflected in its new store design, a better balanced fashion sunwear mix targeting the female customer, and new marketing communication with the consumer, Luxottica Group's (NYSE: LUX) Sunglass Hut specialty chain is experiencing record comp sales as it rolls out its new image worldwide.

In his comments to the financial community, the group's CEO Andrea Guerra views Sunglass Hut as "a most precious asset in our company," and has pointed to the sunwear specialty chain's significant cumulative comp sales increases of 40 percent over the past four years.

**Vision Monday** sat down for an exclusive interview about the new Sunglass Hut approach with Jack Krause, a former Limited Brands retail executive who came to the company two years ago and is now senior vice president of marketing and merchandising for sun retail, North America. He said, "The Sunglass Hut [SGH] business is now structured more like a classic retailer. We see it as a true brand, not just a store that sells sunglasses."

Of the philosophy now in place, Krause said, "All great brands have three pillars—a high level of authenticity; 'curation' or how you make sense of the world for the customer; and entertainment which involves interesting layouts and teaching the customer new things."

"SGH wants to appeals to the masses in a sophisticated way and be the expert in sunglasses to fulfill our customer's needs," he noted. "We are a premium chain, customers know that they can walk out of our store on trend and looking good without being totally outrageous."

Sunglass Hut ended 2007 with 2,152 locations worldwide. By the end of '08 there will be over 1,600 Sunglass Hut locations in North America, which includes the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean.

"Two years ago, the category was exploding and Sunglass Hut's growth was the biggest that it had ever been but we were growing with the market and not leading it. We wanted to move from just being a convenient chain to become a conduit for promoting great product," Krause said. "The goal was to move from selling sunglasses to creating an environment as a fun place to shop and one that portrays expertise, a move towards a more fashion oriented, sophisticated brand."

Fabio D'Angelantonio, global head of marketing for Luxottica Group, told **VM** that the rebranding project was accomplished by an international team. "Luxottica acquired Sunglass Hut in 2001 but the company had started several years earlier and as the name implied, it was a 'sunny hut' for young, sport-oriented males, surfer types. The market has changed a lot since then, not to mention Luxottica's own portfolio of luxury, lifestyle and fashion brands. The business reality and our business direction was to be more balanced between a functional promise and an emotional promise, more in line with consumers' attitudes today."

D'Angelantonio added, "We have defined the brand essence for Sunglass Hut today as 'Find your cool,'" which we think is very flexible, able to move from fashion to performance product. It's a set of values defined as savvy, sexy, fun, inspiring and real. We believe it is a universal concept."

Krause noted the change is reflected in the stores' brand mix. Today, 50 percent to 60 percent of the brands sold in SGH are fashion brands and target customers are segmented into three categories—classic, sport and fashion.

He also said, "The first redesigned U.S. store opened in May '07 and generated 20 percent higher comps than older stores."

"From inside the store there is lots of flexibility," Krause observed. "Go-go' fixtures can move around the store and bring a new story to the customers. Try-on is easier with mirrored bands around the stores. And, as 70 percent of customers buy sunglasses on impulse, the



Sunglass Hut's new stores are more sophisticated and modern.



stores need to be more of a theatre in the front to draw them in."

Said Krause, "A store is like a magazine, we always have an 'editorial' point-of-view and the store front is the 'cover' which invites customers in to 'read the articles,' which are the sunglasses. So the product and merchandising guys are all

working together now. We are working on creating richness in the stories even though we are working with the same product month after month. Recently, our windows had a 'Learn Italian' display to educate customers about Italian brands."

— With contributions from Deirdre Carroll.

## Translating SGH's Retail Experience to ECPs

NEW YORK—"SGH's development over the last few years is a perfect example of the way Luxottica is sharing with its wholesale partners its experience and know-how gained as a leading retailer," stated Luxottica's Pierre Fay, executive vice president, wholesale North America. "This has resulted in direct and measurable benefits for the wholesale dispensers who implemented our recommendations in their practices. It is also clearly resulting in a faster overall growth of the entire sun category as our industry is responding more dynamically to the needs of today's consumers."

Fay added, "Sunwear's share of our wholesale customers' business has exploded over the last few years and we have contributed to this very positive trend thanks to our powerful brand portfolio, fast selling sunglass styles, and effective merchandising solution such as the 'Sun Center' program. The 'Sun Center' was designed using the operating principles that made SGH successful such as offering a wide selection of sunglasses, dedicated display to sunwear with prominent signage and expertise and recommendations to consumers. SGH's highly visible window campaigns have definitely created additional consumer demand for fashion sunglasses and generated traffic to the wholesale locations featuring these brands."



Luxottica's new Trend Reports showcase sun style trends.

Fay said Luxottica continues to actively share its "retail expertise" and with SGH's new image, these well tested retailing techniques are being repackaged in a new and updated "Sun Center" program which will be released shortly to wholesale accounts. He added, "New training seminars are being prepared and will be made available online at the 'Luxottica and Me' Web site providing our accounts new content to successfully create valuable consumer experience in their own locations." ■■

## SCENE AND HEARD

## DRIVE TIME

## Drivewear Launched In Trinidad & Tobago



TORRANCE, Calif.—Younger Optics recently teamed up with Value Optical to introduce consumers to Drivewear lenses at the Premier Cinema and Mall in Trinidad. The event promoted eye health and safety and educated drivers of all ages about the benefits of wearing the Drivewear lens. The booth attracted crowds by displaying a Porsche Cayman sports car and models sporting Drivewear lenses in Porsche frames.

“I only use polarized lenses for my sunglasses and the Drivewear lens meets and surpasses all my expectations of a premium sunglass lens,” said Ameer Ali, optician and lab manager of Optex Laboratories, at the event.

The islands of Trinidad & Tobago in the southern Caribbean together occupy approximately 5,000 sq. km. and have over 4,000 km of roadways, with over 400,000 cars on the island’s network, according to Younger.

Pictured above at the Drivewear launch event in Trinidad are, clockwise from top left: model Anne Wight, Tom Kanaplue and Joe Taitelbaum of Younger Optics; models Gabriella Gonzales and Kai Leggard; Simon Farrell, Danny Jones and Kendra Marshall of Value Optical and Ameer Ali of Optex Laboratories.

## BEST SELLER

## Denver Eye Center Wins Teflon/Transitions Grand Prize



Pictured above during the prize presentation are, left to right, Brannen Hinton of Carl Zeiss Vision, Natasha Petakoff of Transitions Optical, Angie Willis and Doug Wiedeman of Denver Eye Center and Carol Babcock of Transitions Optical.

GOLDEN, Colo.—Denver Eye Center in Golden, Colo., has won the grand prize in the Search for Vision Island promotion co-sponsored by Carl Zeiss Vision and Transitions Optical. The Search for Vision Island rewarded practices for dispensing Teflon Clear Coat Lenses and Transitions lenses. ECPs received a gold “doubloon” sticker for every pair of Teflon Clear Coat Lenses ordered from a participating lab. Orders that combined Teflon Clear Coat Lenses and Transitions lenses on the same pair earned two stickers. In addition to cash prizes, a drawing chose one winner of a \$3,000 Caribbean vacation or cash equivalent.

The Search for Vision Island rewarded practices for dispensing Teflon Clear Coat Lenses and Transitions lenses. ECPs received a gold “doubloon” sticker for every pair of Teflon Clear Coat Lenses ordered from a participating lab. Orders that combined Teflon Clear Coat Lenses and Transitions lenses on the same pair earned two stickers. In addition to cash prizes, a drawing chose one winner of a \$3,000 Caribbean vacation or cash equivalent.

## SALES SESSION

## Hoya Vision Care Staff Attend National Sales Meeting

LEWISVILLE, Texas—Hoya Vision Care, North America, kicked off 2008 with the company’s annual national sales and operations meeting. More than 140 Hoya sales associates, lab operations management and other key personnel traveled to St. Augustine, Fla., Jan. 5 to 10, to attend education sessions on new products, company goals and sales tools.

“Hoya is being recognized for technological advances in lens designs, materials and coatings. Our focus on research and development along with technology to provide products with superior functionality and improve the patient’s experience will continue in 2008,” said Barney Dougher, president and CEO of Hoya Vision Care, North America, which is based here.

Peter Kehoe, OD, FAAO, president-elect of the American Optometric Association, delivered the meeting’s keynote speech. Dr. Kehoe addressed the need for doctors to take a more active role in choosing lenses for patients and the no-cost public health program InfantSEE, which was developed to provide professional eyecare for infants nationwide.



(L to R) Rich Montag, VP of sales, Peter Kehoe, OD, president-elect of AOA and Barney Dougher, president of Hoya Vision Care, North America, enjoy the President’s Banquet held on the last night of Hoya’s national sales meeting in St. Augustine, Fla.

## NEW DIGS

## Innereactive Media Opens Office



Michigan State Representative Dave Hildenbrand presented Innereactive Media president and founder Samantha Toth and her team with a plaque of “Special Tribute” to commemorate the significance of the business opening in the community. The tribute cites both the economic impact as well as the investment into the future of the area. Pictured with Hildenbrand (center), are left to right, Innereactive’s Rachel Culver, Samantha Toth, Elicia Davis and Jennifer Palaske.

ADA, Mich.—Innereactive Media recently celebrated the opening of its new, larger location here. The five-year-old, full-service advertising agency works with a number of optical industry clients, including Global Optics and Harbor Optical. Its in-house services include video production, Web development, graphic design and corporate branding.

Invited guests, including clients and local officials attended the open house event.

## TAG, YOU'RE IT



## Ilori Hosts Golfer Ochoa

Luxottica’s luxury sunglasses boutique, Ilori, celebrated its exclusive Tag Heuer sunglasses collection on Tuesday, Feb. 5, at the Ilori boutique in their Carmel Plaza store. The event was hosted by professional Colombian female golfer Valeria Ochoa, who took time to model a few pairs of the Tag Heuer collection for guests.



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## NEWS VIEWS

# New Speakers Set for VM's Global Summit

*Neimark, Guerra, McAllister, Lynch, Pfortner, others to discuss tech, luxury, healthcare*

NEW YORK—The roster of leadership speakers at **Vision Monday's** upcoming Global Leadership Summit has been expanded to include Ira Neimark, the author of "Crossing Fifth Avenue to Bergdorf Goodman." Neimark is the legendary former chairman and CEO of Bergdorf Goodman, a major figure in the luxury business who will share his observations and expertise in the Summit session on the luxury consumer. Also addressing the current luxury consumer market will be Luxottica's CEO, Andrea Guerra.

The two are part of a unique group of CEOs and speakers from within and outside the optical industry who will offer insights to an exclusive group of attendees at **Vision Monday's** 2nd Annual Global Leadership Summit, set for April 9 here.

"This year's Summit is organized on the theme, 'Harnessing the Power of Today's Consumer Communities' and

this one-of-a-kind special event will bring together leaders to discuss trends and provide thought-provoking ideas in four sessions spanning the technology and digital media, the luxury marketplace and the health care arenas," said Marge Axelrad, senior VP/editorial director of **Vision Monday**.

The 2nd VM Global Leadership Summit is sponsored by Hoya, Transitions, The Vision Council and DAC Vision.

The event is geared to senior-level executives of U.S. and international optical retailers, ECPs, and suppliers.

On the topic of technology affecting consumers and health care, speakers will include: Lynn O'Connor Vos, president and CEO, Grey Healthcare Group, New York and Erin Byrne, chief digital strategist, Burson-Marsteller, New York.

On the issues shaping the health care field, speakers will include J. Robinson



Erin Byrne



Andrea Guerra



Ira Neimark



Jeff McAllister



John O. Agwunobi, MD



J. Robinson Lynch



Tomás Pfortner



Lynn O'Connor Vos

Lynch, president and CEO, VSP Vision Care and John O. Agwunobi, MD, president of professional services, Wal-Mart Stores, Bentonville, Ark.

On issues facing the optical retail world, speakers include Jeff McAllister, senior VP of optical, Wal-Mart Stores, U.S. and adding perspective from Argentina and Latin America, Dr. Tomás Pfortner, CEO,

Laboratorio Pfortner Cornealent SACIF, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The program will be held at Bridgewater's (South Street Seaport) in New York; registration begins at 8 a.m., with the program from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Attendance fees, registration and program information are available at [www.visionmonday.com](http://www.visionmonday.com). ■

The Accessories Council invites you to a "Hall of Fame" tribute honoring:

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Vision Monday & 20/20 Magazines  
Jobson Optical Group

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## SCENE AND HEARD

## ATLANTA BOUND

## SECO Int'l Draws ECPs from Across Nation

ATLANTA—This year's SECO International event, held here from Feb. 27 to March 2, drew optometrists, paraoptometric, opticians and other eye-care professionals from around the country.

The event, sponsored by the Southern Council of Optometrists, included more than 95 continuing education courses, as well as an exhibit area highlighting the latest products and programs from nearly 300 industry suppliers. In addition, evening events including the annual president's reception provided plenty of opportunities for networking.



Keith Padgett (l) of Marchon Eyewear fills in Ken Moultrie, OD, of Eyecare Associates, Huntsville, Ala, on the latest Coach styles.



Outgoing SECO president Doug Clark, OD, with daughters Skylar (l) and Dru, welcomes guests to the president's reception.



Luxottica's David Digby (r) catches up with veteran optician Franklin Zahn while visiting the Luxottica booth.



At the president's reception, Steve Ingram (l) of the National Association of Vision Plans chats with Vision Council of America's Greg Chavez.



Three members of the American Optometric Association—(l to r) Mitch Munson, OD; Tommy Crooks, OD; and Dick Wallingford, OD—catch up during SECO.



At the SECO president's reception, Vistakon's Pat Cummings, OD (l), and Naomi Kelman visit with Howard Braverman, OD.



SECO International's executive director, Elizabeth Taylor (r), welcomes Ted McElroy, OD, of Tifton, Ga., and his wife Kristin to the annual SECO president's reception.



Safilo's John Blake (l) chats at his company's booth with Tony Johnson, OD (c), and Dale David, OD, both of Jervey Eye Group, Greenville, S.C.



Dan Walters (l) of Santinelli International goes over his company's latest technology with Fred Wallace, OD, of Bessemer, Ala.

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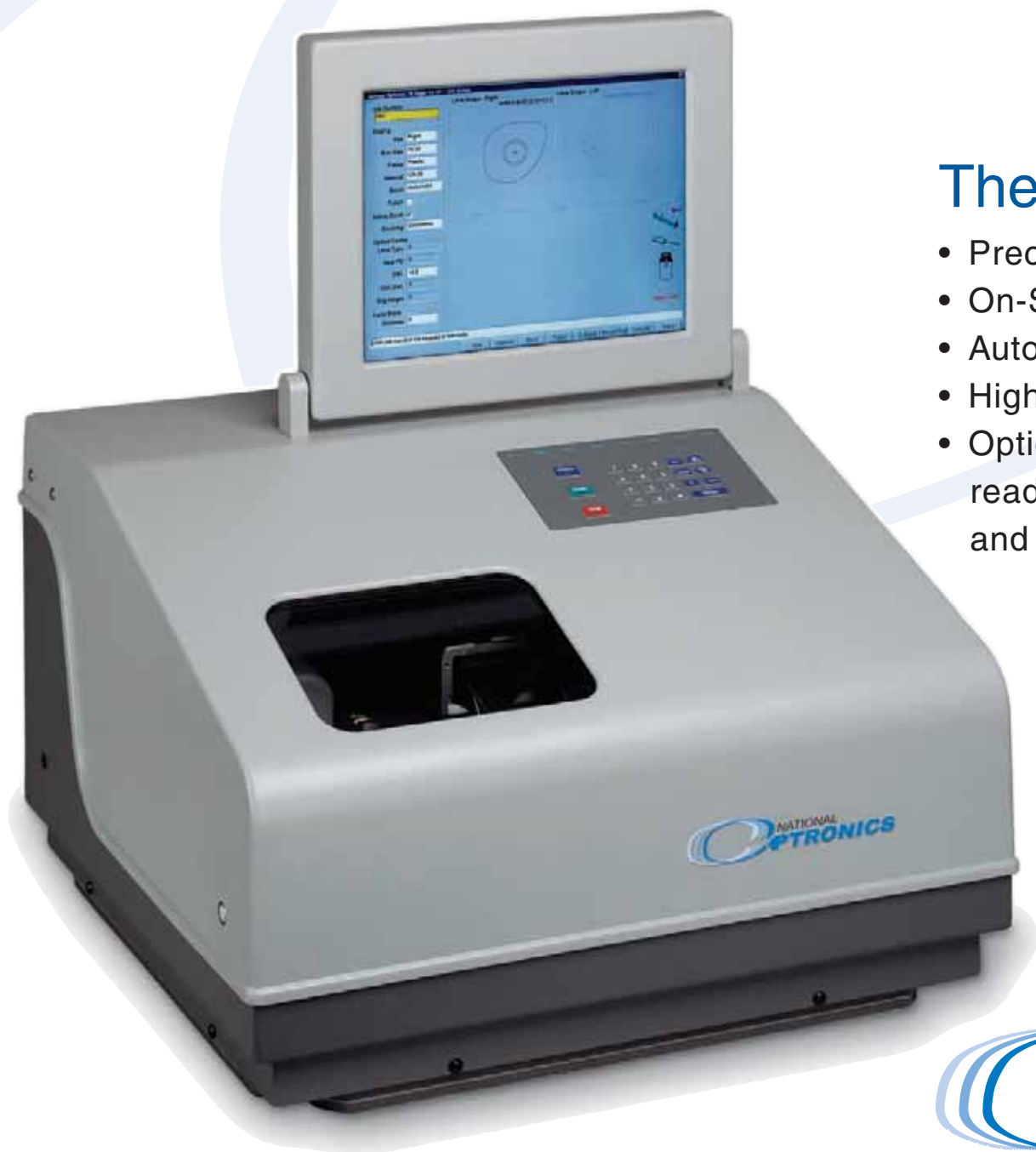


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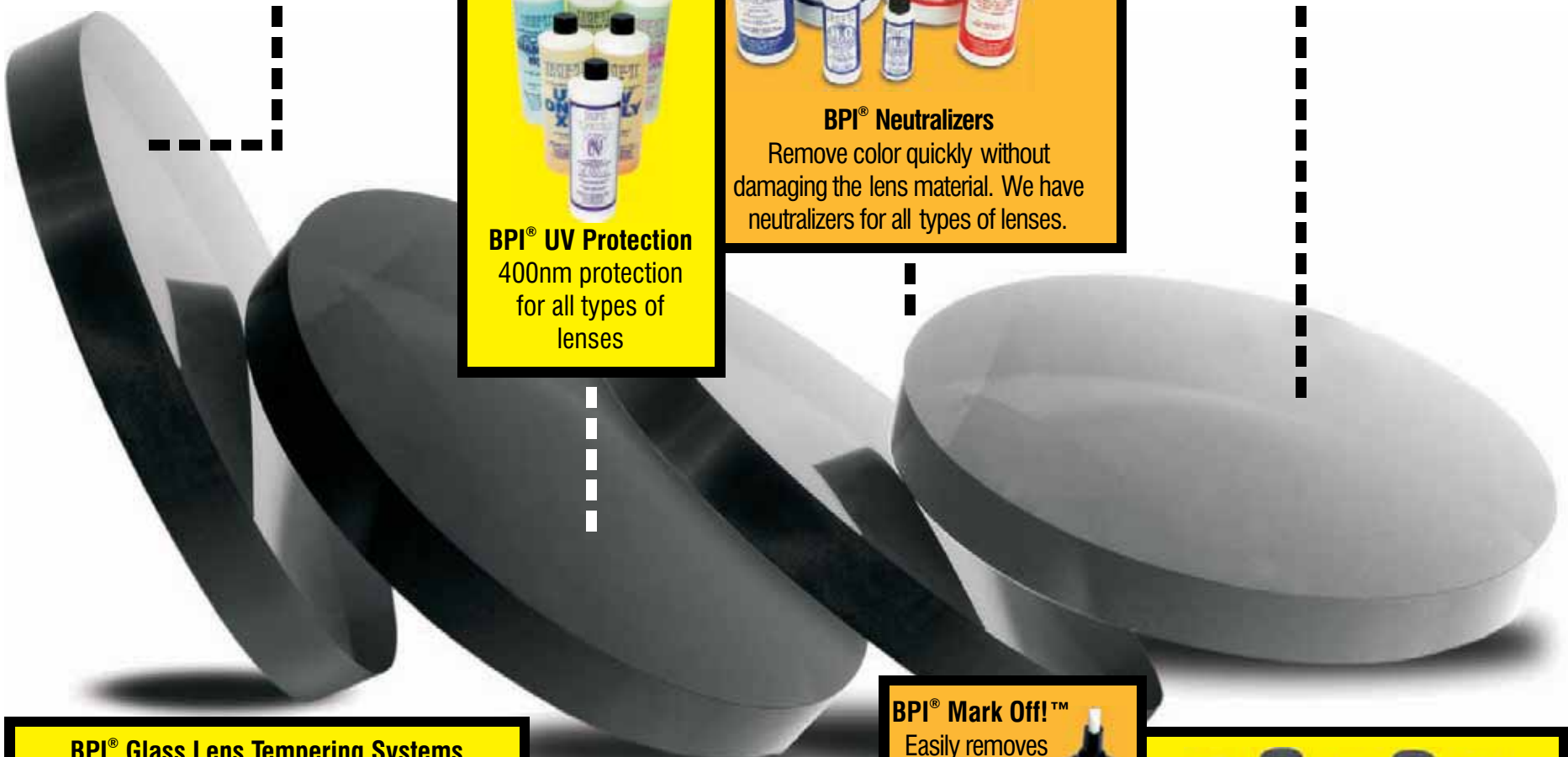

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## CE Program to Feature Exclusive, Cutting Edge Content

NEW YORK— This year's International Vision Expo Continuing Education Program will once again be offering attendees a vast selection of courses with exclusive content concentrating on cutting edge topics and up-to-date industry issues aimed at keeping the three Os on the right track. The 2008 program will feature more than 250 hours of continuing education from April 10 to 13 at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center here. The exhibition portion of Expo is slated to run from April 11 to 13.

Courses and programming for International Vision Expo are selected with the assistance of the Conference Advisory Board, comprised of leading ophthalmologists, optometrists and opticians to provide input for all industry professionals. With the aim of providing a broad selection for optometrists, ophthalmic professionals including opticians, paraoptometric professionals and staff, as well as ophthalmologists, the Conference Advisory Board develops programming to include a mix of well-reviewed speakers, topics, cutting edge information and current topics of interest.

"Uniquely Defined" is the title for this year's event, describing the unparalleled positioning, coverage and exposure that International Vision Expo East provides the entire ophthalmic industry," said Kirk Smick, OD and chair of the Conference Advisory Board. "The



education program is the centerpiece of the event for the entire industry, one that offers breadth as well as depth."

Some 15 new courses are being offered this April for ophthalmic professionals covering topics such as corneal controversies, anterior segment photography service behaviors and how to create eyewear desire.

Some topics and educational opportunities can only be found at Vision Expo East. This year, there are 12 exclusive courses including "Women Ask For Directions," "Magnify Your Future 2008" and "Contact Lens Boot Camp."

Conference Advisory Board members

have also designated "Hot Picks"—cutting edge topics and information that address current industry issues such as the use and abuse of steroids, increasing sunwear sales and ocular emergencies and triage.

The entire course selection has been submitted to ABO, NCLE, JCAHPO, COPE, AOA Paraoptometric Section, the New York State Board for Ophthalmic Dispensing and all State Boards of Opticianry for consideration of continuing education credit approval. The conference program is officially endorsed by the New York State Optometric Association and the National

Academy of Opticianry.

This year's Continuing Education sponsors include: Advanced Medical Optics, Alcon, Allergan, Bausch & Lomb, Carl Zeiss Meditec, CIBA Vision, Cynacon, Essilor, Eyecare Business, Heidelberg Engineering, Inspire, MaximEyes, MSS, Neurovision, Ophthonix, Optos, Signet Armorlite, Sonogage, TLC Laser Eye Centers, Topcon, Vision Council of America, Vistakon and Younger Optics.

For the full conference schedule, descriptions and featured speakers, as well as continuing education credit status approval, visit [www.visionexpoeast.com](http://www.visionexpoeast.com).

International Vision Expos, the worldwide conference and exhibition for eyecare and eyewear, are trade-only events which draw more than 15,000 eyecare professionals each year. Co-owned by Reed Exhibitions and the Vision Council of America (VCA), International Vision Expo gives back to the entire ophthalmic community. Proceeds from International Vision Expo are used by VCA to educate consumers about the importance of vision care and the options in eyewear and other related products. In 2007, VCA reached millions of consumers with its messages through marketing materials, public relations outreach and strategic partnerships. ■

## Expand Your Knowledge at the Medical & Scientific Pavilion



NEW YORK— For ophthalmic professionals interested in contact lenses, diagnostic equipment, pharmaceuticals and similar products, the Medical & Scientific

Pavilion at Expo is the place to be when it comes to finding the latest technologies and advances. With free continuing education courses offered at the pavilion

throughout the show, eyecare professionals can expand their knowledge about this ever-changing field.

Located in the Medical & Scientific Theater (Booth MS-1176), this year's continuing education program includes the following courses:

### Friday, April 11

- Integrating Wavefront Technology Into Your Practice: Clinical And Practice Management Insights (Sponsored by Ophthonix iZon)
- Improving Patient Vision Through Advanced Lens Technology (By invitation only; Sponsored by Essilor, Varilux)
- Gaining Greater Efficiency and Profitability In Your Practice

Through the Use of Automated Refraction Systems (Sponsored by Marco)

### Saturday, April 12

- Eyewear Fashion in the 21st Century

(Sponsored by Score)

- Structural Imaging In Glaucoma (Sponsored by Marco)
- The Paperless Optometric Practice— Myth or Reality (Sponsored by Topcon)
- Medical Coding and Reimbursement (Sponsored by EyeCor)
- GT2: It's All About Satisfaction (Sponsored by Carl Zeiss Vision)

### Sunday, April 13

- Maximizing Your Profits by Improving Your Patients' Education, (Sponsored by Eyemaginations)
- Differentiation in Today's Modern Optical Practice (Sponsored by Hoya)

Attendees are able to select as many courses as they would like but seating is limited and registration is required. To register, visit [www.visionexpoeast.com](http://www.visionexpoeast.com) or call Client Services at (800) 811-7151 or register at the show in the continuing education registration area. ■



## Special Symposium for Female Eyecare Professionals

NEW YORK—International Vision Expo East will present a free symposium on April 11, “Women Ask for Directions—24 Words to Avoid to Build Better Business Relationships,” a course geared specifically for female eyecare professionals. Since its inception, over 600 participants have joined their peers in ses-



sions designed for women to assess their current career status and create a road map to successfully plan and manage their career.

Just like the first session, “Women Ask for Directions—Communicate with Strength,” this year’s content will focus on 24 new words and phrases to avoid in order to make commu-

nication and relationship building as easy as possible, in both professional and personal situations. Karen Purves, a sought-after international speaker, business consultant and life coach, will share how simply changing some of the words you use will affect your success with others.

“This seminar is an amazing opportunity to improve how to communicate more effectively,” said previous course attendee Dr. Nicole Pearce, OD, of The

Eye Gallery in Decatur, Ga..

The symposium, “Women Ask for Directions—24 Words to Avoid to Build Better Business Relationships” takes place Friday, April 11, from 10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. All eyecare professionals are welcome to participate in this free career growth workshop. However, to take advantage of this free session, attendees must register for course #2213. The event is not for credit. ■

## Optical Boot Camp: Back by Popular Demand

NEW YORK—The exclusive Optical Boot Camp training sessions, always a popular choice for attendees, will be returning to International Vision Expo East. This year’s sessions include the following:

### Optical Boot Camp Level –Training for New Dispensers

This six-hour program features a comprehensive overview of the basic skill sets and optical information needed to get your staff up and running and delivering quality patient care and guidance in product selection. This session will cover all the need to know information on: “The Incredible Eye: Basic Ocular Anatomy and Physiology;” “Practical Optics: Light, Lenses and Frames;” “Boot Camp Dispensing Tactics: Eyewear Function, Fit and Fashion.”

Historically, this session sells out at each International Vision Expo. Seating is limited and the session is not for credit. Sponsored by Essilor, Crizal Alize and Varilux,

in conjunction with The Vision Council’s Eyewear & Accessories Division, Optical Boot Camp Level 1 takes place Thursday, April 10, from 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and continues from 1:30 p.m.- 4:30 pm.

### Optical Boot Camp Level 2—Top Gun

This session was created to help eyecare professionals continue their learning and maximize career potential. This four-hour program features all the “need to know” information on ocular problems, symptoms and diagnoses, optical salesmanship, troubleshooting patient eyewear complaints and alignment and adjustment tips and techniques.

A dynamic team of experts deliver this session in a fun, interactive format. Optical Boot Camp Level 2 should be attended by all Boot Camp Level 1 alumni and other first and second year optical employees.

This session, sponsored by Essilor Laboratories of America and Stimuleye, in conjunction with The Vision Council’s Eye-

wear & Accessories Division, takes place Saturday, April 12, from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

### Contact Lens Boot Camp

This six-hour Contact Lens Boot Camp (a.k.a. Contact Lens 101) is designed for the beginning contact lens technician or optician. It provides a comprehensive overview of the following technical areas: basic (contact lens relevant) anatomy and physiology, basic CL optics, identifying lens parameters, initial assessment, basic soft and rigid lens fitting, lens care and dis-



persing instructions and follow up.

Held on Thursday, April 10, from 10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. and continuing from 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m., the course is not for credit. ■

## Total Office Package Pricing



NEW YORK—To ensure that several individuals from the same practice location can attend the International Vision Expo East Continuing Education Conference economically, a variety of money-saving pricing packages will be offered once again this year.

Total Office Packages are designed to accommodate several individuals from the same practice and make it affordable for doctors to bring their staff. These packages offer education in 25-,

35-, and 45-hour increments. When selecting a Total Office Packaging, all registrants must use the same company name and address. Standard Pricing Packages will be offered in 6-, 9-, 13-, and 18+ hour increments, along with a la carte session options.

All CE registrations include free admission to the exhibits; admission to the enhanced CE Café available in the back of the continuing education area (Hall E, Level 1). Costs of the sessions vary, and some sessions are not part of pricing packages. Additional hours can be added to both the Total Office and Standard Pricing packages for \$30 per hour.

The \$40 Continuing Education Registration Processing Fee applies if only registering for workshops. Advanced Registration is required for Free courses and seating is limited. ■

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# Building the Modern Independent “Super” Practice

Today's independent eyecare professionals are not standing still. Far from it. Many of the most successful, those “super” practices, whose revenues exceed \$1 million per year, are proactive about both their eyecare delivery as well as the dispensing sides of their business.

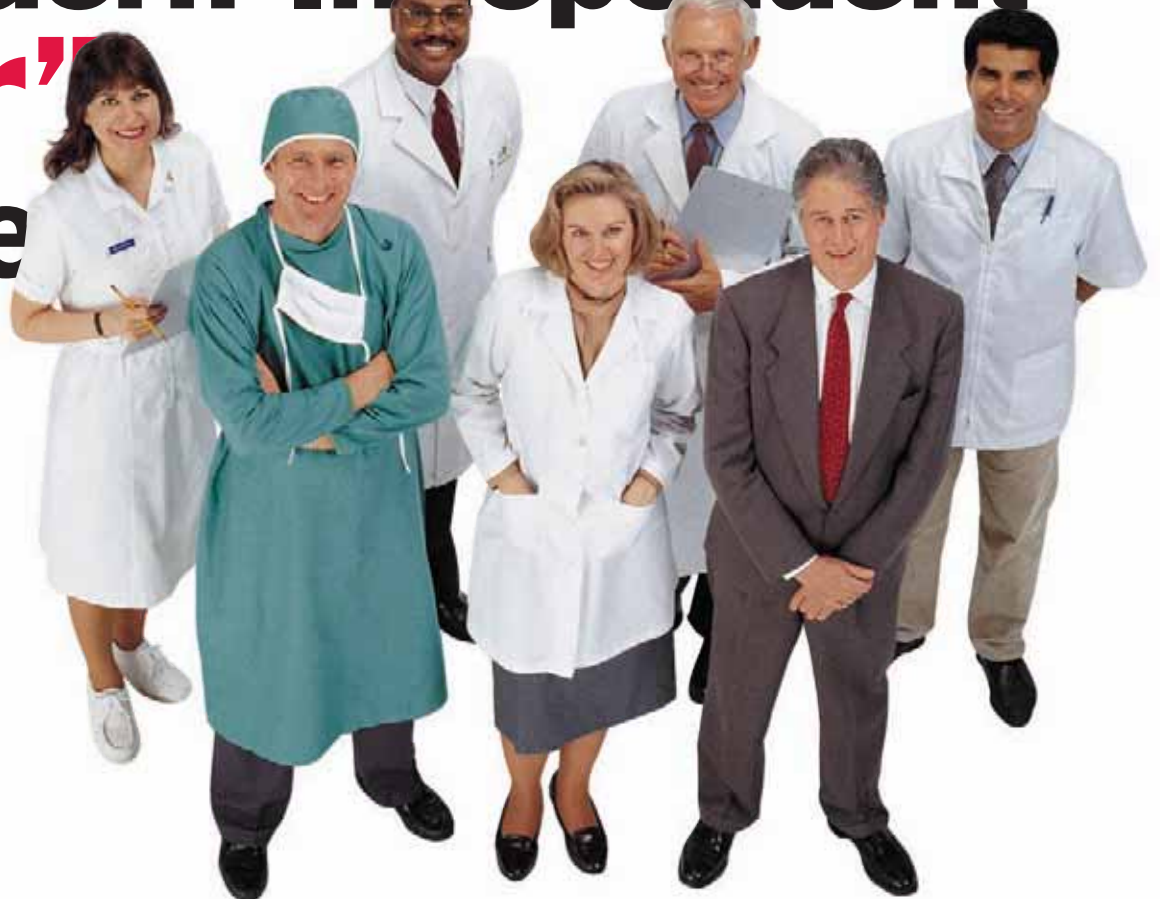
Despite signs of a challenging economy, these ECPS are reinvesting in practice systems and technologies that are revolutionizing the eye exam process, communicating the value and complexity of eyecare along with their own expertise. They are system-

atizing patient records and tracking systems for continuous care and monetizing investments in practice management technology to help monitor costs and managed care involvement. They are also attuned to the patient demographics of each location,

focusing on stoking select vendor partnerships for sharp presentations and merchandising in order to be sure their mix of eyewear, sunwear and spectacle lens and contact lens solutions is matched to their customers' needs.

**Vision Monday** takes a look at four such practices around the country to highlight how ECP groups are carving out an important role for their positions in the markets they serve.

—VM Editors



## Investing in Primary Eyecare and Dispensing



Ben Gaddie, OD, (l) and his father, Bruce J. Gaddie, OD.

### Gaddie Eye Centers

**Location:** 4 locations in Louisville, Ky.

**Founded:** 1968

**Owner:** Ian Benjamin Gaddie, OD and Bruce J. Gaddie, OD

**Web Site:** [www.gaddieeye.com](http://www.gaddieeye.com)

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Marking its 40th year in operation this year, Gaddie Eye Centers is in the midst of a major expansion mode for its practices serving a range of patients throughout the greater Louisville area.

The practice, established by Bruce J. Gaddie, OD in 1968, operated in

two professional offices for nearly 25 years. His son Ian Benjamin Gaddie, OD came back from optometry school in 1999 to join the practice and opened additional offices. What excites Ben Gaddie now is the major overall and redesign of the group's main office on Shelbyville Road, its Oxmoor location, which is currently undergoing a million-dollar-plus investment overhaul, taking over space that became available adjacent to the original office, across from the two largest shopping malls in the state.

When it's completed later this spring, Gaddie will have tripled its office space,

boasting a new 8,500 square foot state-of-the-art facility. “We are trying to differentiate ourselves and it's our goal for this to be the most prominent space for eyecare in Louisville,” Gaddie said, noting that the original location's lack of space had plateaued the growth of the location. “It had been inefficient and really diminished the patient experience.”

Gaddie said that he, his father and his colleagues are “passionate about the integration of full-scope eyecare into the practice. The focus on primary care started with my dad, who specialized in con-

*Continued on page 44*

## Location Makes a World of Difference



Michael Crutchfield, OD



State-of-the art equipment is available in the exam room.



The dispensary offers high-end frames for an upper middle class clientele.

### Clear Vision Eye Center

**Location:** Las Vegas and Pahrump, Nev.

**Year Founded:** 2001

**Owners:** Michael Crutchfield, OD, Ronald Dutton, OD, Lindy Thomas, OD

**Web Site:** www.clearvisioneyecenters.com

Location. Location. Location. It's not just a mantra for the real estate market. Clear Vision Eye Center is a perfect example of how the right location can make all the difference in the world of business as well. "One of the things that's unique to the Las Vegas area is that people are always moving here," according to Mike Crutchfield, OD, a partner in this two-location practice generating \$3.5 million per year in revenues. In total, the professional staff includes 18 employees, four full-time doctors, Ronald Dutton, OD, Lindy Thomas, OD, Michael Crutchfield, OD, and Joe Firmen, OD; all are partners in the practice with the exception of Firmen.

"Our location is one thing that really sets us apart from the competition. The area where one of our practices is located is not far from the Vegas Strip, which as you know is filled with hotels." And the downtown Las Vegas area is literally

bursting at the seams: this year alone, there are some 40,000 hotel rooms scheduled to come online. "If you do the math, that works out to about three hotel workers per room and that's good news for us since we get customers ranging from bus boys to hotel managers," he said.

Clear Vision has all its bases covered between its two locations: one in downtown Las Vegas and the other practice in Pahrump, a suburb located about an hour west of Sin City. Between the two locations, this full-service optometric practice offers the services of three full-time and one part-time OD. In the Las Vegas location, there is a Lasik and cataract center in the building and the ophthalmologist sees patients two times per month.

Both locations offer high-end products in their dispensary, featuring frames from Luxottica, Marchon and Sàfilo and this fits right in with the type of clientele which Crutchfield describes as "upper middle class."

However, getting people to walk through the door is only part of the equation—getting them to stay for an eye exam, make a purchase and hope-

fully come back several times a year is the key to running a successful practice, according to Crutchfield.

In an attempt to grow their practice, Clear Vision has been intent on providing the best level of customer service they possibly can. "We specialize in upper-end frames and are a service-oriented business. Our equipment is state of the art and includes a visual field machine and [Ophthonix] iZon equipment used to make high definition lenses. As the business has changed and grown, we've continued to add state-of-the-art equipment in an attempt to stay ahead of the power curve. We are always looking to add equipment," Crutchfield said.

Clear Vision also invests a fair amount of time in training their staff on how to use the equipment. "At least once a week, we take the staff through some kind of training exercise. We also keep our front desk managers up-to date on the ins and outs of insurance plans."

Clear Vision accepts several types of

insurance including VSP, Medicare, Davis Vision and EyeMed insurance plans. "Processing people's insurance is one of our biggest challenges here. We need to understand how the different plans work because our patients have come to expect this expertise as part of our customer service," Crutchfield said.

On the efficiency front, all of Clear Vision's records are electronic, making them a truly paperless office when it comes to tracking patients' records, appointments and billing procedures. "We use a system called maximEyes made by a company called First Insight. I can absolutely state this has made us more efficient because we never have to look for records—we know right where to find things," he said.

As for the future, Crutchfield believes the key to growing the business lies in availability. "One of the ways we can increase our business is to make sure we are more available, which is why we increased our hours at the Pahrump location. Another one of the reasons we expanded is because there are not very many optometrists in the area," he said.

And when it comes to the economic gloom and doom perpetuated by the media, Crutchfield admits that Clear Vision, which is still growing, has so far remained untouched by the downturn. "As far as our patient base goes, about 40 percent are new patients and 60 percent are past or repeat patients and we are tracking our growth so far for the year at 26 percent. As far as the economy goes, we are all concerned because of what we read but as you can see, it really hasn't had an effect on us." —Mary Kane

## Affluent Patient Base, Franchise Support Help Cushion Economy's Blows

### Doctors Vision Center

**Location:** Pinehurst, N.C.

**Founded:** Became a franchisee in 2000

**Franchise Owners:** L. Kennedy Bumgarner, OD; Scott Athans, OD

**Web Site:** www.doctorsvisioncenter.com

PINEHURST, N.C.—For partners L. Kennedy (Kenny) Bumgarner, OD, and Scott Athans, OD, being franchisees in the Doctors Vision Center network offers the freedom of owning and managing their own practice coupled with the benefits of centrally negotiated buying discounts and promotional support.

Their shift from unaffiliated private practice to franchised office came in 2000, providing an infrastructure that helped the

two optometrists build an active patient base of about 38,000 in this upscale retiree area. Last year, the practice generated more than \$2.6 million in revenues from its single location, with about 12,750 patients seen during 2007. The professional staff consists of four ODs (two of them part-time) and 17 staff.

Said Bumgarner, "We're big on planning, tracking patients and analyzing results in this office, and we focus strongly on the medical side of our profession as well as the retail side. And in terms of that, Doctors Vision Center invented the wheel—we just bought the wheel."

That focus on optometry's medical aspects—as well as its well-off patient

*Continued on page 42*



L. Kennedy Bumgarner, OD



# Eye defense.



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## 46-Year Old Practice Stands the Test of Time



West Valley Vision's optometrists, from left to right: Dr. Christopher Furey, Dr. Stacey Burson, Dr. Steven Holt, Dr. Brent Wilson.



The practice is located west of Phoenix.



Six opticians work in the practice's large dispensary.

### West Valley Vision

**Location:** Goodyear, Ariz.

**Founded:** 1962

**Owner:** Dr. Chris Furey, OD, owner

**Web Site:** www.westvalleyvision.com

In the Phoenix area, West Valley Vision is a well-known eyecare and eyewear destination. Located just west of the city, this \$3.3 million practice was founded in 1962 by optometrist Charles Heiner. Dr. Christopher Furey, OD, purchased West Valley Vision in 1995, three years after joining the practice.

Dr. Furey and his staff of 25, including three other optometrists—Dr. Stacey Burson, Dr. Steven Holt, Dr. Brent Wilson—provide a full scope of eyecare services and products to about 25,000 patients. Techno-

logically up to date, the practice features automated exam lanes and electronic patient records. Six opticians work in the large dispensary which offers an array of the latest frames and lenses. An on-site finishing lab ensures rapid service for eyeglass wearing patients.

“We add new equipment on a regular basis,” said Dr. Furey. “Last year, we bought an [Ophthonix] iZon aberrometer, an updated digital field and a Humphrey Matrix that allows us to scan the retina for ocular disease.”

Dr. Holt added, “We’ve tried to stay up with technology. Our patients notice it. They tell us they get a more comprehensive exam because we use the latest technology.”

Upon entering the exam room, patients are often impressed with high tech touches such as seeing their retinal scan on the

computer screen, or observing the doctor call up their files electronically.

“We’ve had some form of electronic records for five years,” Dr. Furey detailed. For the past three years, the practice has been using First Insight’s maximEyes program. In addition to tracking patients, appointments and billing, the software monitors inventory and calculates the percentage of profit on various products.”

“We can access the system from any computer in the office. We’re totally networked,” Dr. Furey said.

Offering the latest lens technology is also important at West Valley Vision. Products such as the Varilux Ipseo progressive or the Ophthonix iZon lens underscore this approach.

“[The iZon lens] is one of the few lenses you put on and say ‘Wow,’” Dr. Furey said. “Patients are becoming more receptive to it.”

Dr. Furey pointed out that maintaining a large, well-trained staff allows West Valley Vision to provide high-quality

service. “Every doctor has a tech-and-a-half who works with them,” he explained. “We send the techs to training seminars regularly. We take advantage of our Walman Optical rep, who comes out to visit us about every six weeks. She works with any staff member that needs help. This month, she’s going to do a seminar on polarized lenses.”

To keep its profile high in a competitive optical market, West Valley Vision does its share of advertising. Unlike some practices, it runs only a brief listing in the Yellow Pages, preferring instead to concentrate its advertising in local newspapers.

The practice also attracts patients through its Web site, www.westvalleyvision.com, as well as through Vision Service Plan’s site.

“We’re heavily invested with VSP, and our name pops up on their Web site,” said Dr. Holt.

Yet Dr. Holt believes word of mouth referrals are the key to the practice’s success. “It’s our biggest asset,” he remarked.

—Andrew Karp

*Continued from page 40*

base—has helped generate steady growth over the years for this 10,000 square foot office, Bumgarner told **VM**. For example, “we have a very big glaucoma practice, and we can take those patients to the point where when we refer them to ophthalmology, we always refer to a specialist, not a general ophthalmologist.”

Patient education—about eye disease as well as about the proper eyewear and lenses—is a key element of the practice as well, and another factor that has helped insulate it from the vagaries of the U.S. economy.

“The quality of the care we provide is very important to us, and part of that care is making sure patients understand that what they’re getting in their glasses in terms of lenses and lens treatments is as significant as a medicine they might be prescribed,” Bumgarner explained. “Our staff makes sure patients under-



The dispensary in the Doctors Vision Center franchised office in Pinehurst, N.C., holds a prominent place just off the waiting area.

stand the value of AR or UV protection, for example.”

Because of that, the practice’s revenues from AR lenses rose 15 percent in 2007, while revenues from scratch-protection coatings were up 28 percent—despite a 12.4 percent drop in frame sales for the year. (“Because of the econ-

omy, I guess, we saw more patients putting new lenses into their old frames last year,” Bumgarner noted.)

In addition to strong word of mouth, a steady stream of promotions from franchisor Doctors Vision Center helps maintain patient flow. He said, “The company runs promotions on various topics—some oriented toward specific eye diseases or allergies, others more retail/optical focused.”

Staff training is another important part of the equation for Bumgarner and Athans. In addition to using training modules provided by Doctors Vision Center’s central headquarters, the practice holds weekly staff meetings to make sure all departments and employees are on the same page regarding its latest programs and products.

The practice is heavily computerized,

with a goal of going “paperless” within 12 to 18 months, according to Bumgarner, whose wife, Katherine, serves as office manager. “At this point, pretty much everything is done via computer except the doctors’ writing out the exams,” he explained. “We’re doing email follow-ups with patients, and preappointing over the central Web site, www.doctorsvisioncenter.com.”

Looking ahead, Bumgarner is cautious but optimistic about prospects for the coming year. “We’re seeing some uncertainty in the economy,” he acknowledged. “But we’re very proactive, and revenues were up nearly 25 percent in February. We built this practice on the quality of care we provide, which Doctors Vision Center encourages, so we’re somewhat insulated from economic ups and downs—and what we do on a regular basis works to help us in these tough times.”

—Cathy Ciccollella





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*Continued from page 39*

tact lenses; I do a lot of disease and glaucoma management. In the face of the rise of vision plans in general, the ability to generate a medical component to our practice has been key.”

There are a total of eight ODs, including the Gaddies, who serve patients throughout all the locations; the expansion of Oxmoor will mean the addition of more ODs in that new facility, which will expand from four exam lanes to nine plus two fully-equipped pre-test areas. “We’re doubling our through-put there. We took a total team approach with our staff and tried to think about flow and gather input on what’s been frustrating us all due to lack of space until now.” Gaddie works with an experienced professional practice administrator, Scott Keiser, “who has been instrumental in helping us implement this new vision,” Gaddie noted.

The new space will be a true corporate HQ, with meeting rooms and a reconfiguration of space for billing, administration and a centralized phone bank to facilitate appointments and answer service questions. “Currently, the insurance people, bookkeepers and

accountants are commingled in the professional environment, which can be disruptive. We want to focus on better, high-value customer interactions.”

Gaddie has been working with Eye Designs on the project and is focusing on the new look of its expanded dispensary, a devoted sun area, and its designer mix of frames where “each brand identity can be maximized,” he noted.

He continued, “We’re of the philosophy that we want to control our inventory, which is a crucial issue in running any dispensary. We’ve consolidated from a range of about 20 to 30 vendors to eight or nine partnerships. When an exclusive high-end line comes through, we’re still willing to take a risk to put in something new. We want people to get in Louisville what they might normally have to go to Chicago or New York to get.”

Gaddie’s other locations include one in Prospect, at the northeast end of Louisville, an upscale, growing area.

The third location is in LaGrange, further northeast of Louisville in the next



Gaddie’s LaGrange location.



In the dispensary, a patient learns about eyewear via an Eyemaginations’ system.

county, now in a freestanding building the company built. “This practice serves a mix of middle class patients, and we draw from six counties where there is no eyecare.”

The Gaddie location the farthest northeast of Louisville is in Carrollton, Ky, in a very industrial area with limited health care. Gaddie is on the staff of the regional hospital there.

The practice started in-house finishing many years ago and until three months ago, operated its own surfacing lab to support all locations for most jobs. When AR coating technology changed, and recognizing that AR was becoming a more significant component of their lens business, Gaddie recently negotiated a

new outside lab arrangement. The original surfacing lab space will be reconfigured.

In addition, the Gaddie dispensary features the Cyberimaging tool, which hooks into Eyemaginations software, to provide a high-impact visual and dispensing experience for patients when they work with opticians. Gaddie noted, “This new technology will differentiate us from others; it has already helped increase our sales of traditional add-on materials and features.”

Of the new expansion project, Gaddie said, “We had an opportunity and wanted to be sure we took the chance when we had it to build out. If you have access to capital, when it’s a down market, it’s always a good time to invest for the future.”

—Marge Axelrad

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## NEWS VIEWS

# SECO Attendance Up; Bill Lord, OD, Named President

By **Cathy Ciccolella**  
Senior Editor



Doug Clark, OD

ATLANTA—Though final attendance figures for this year's SECO International meeting had not yet been announced at press time, the event was expected by show organizers to wind up as SECO's largest ever in terms of attendance. SECO 2008 was on track to draw at least 8,000 eyecare professionals from around the world, according to Doug Clark, OD, who was succeeded as president of SECO International on Feb. 29 by Bill Lord, OD.

Clark noted that SECO International continues to attract a growing number of allied ophthalmic professionals as well as optometrists; opticians in particular are increasing their ranks among the attendees.

Goals achieved for this year's event, according to Clark, included an expanded Optometry's Marketplace exhibit area, with close to 300 industry suppliers showing off their latest products and programs. In addition, he said the group has been working to encourage education

sponsorship by spectacle lens manufacturers; this year, Essilor of America and Hoya Vision Care were among the sponsors of SECO's nearly 400 hours of continuing education courses.

In a press briefing, incoming SECO president Lord noted that next year's SECO International will shift its timing from the normal late-February pattern of recent years; this year's event was held Feb. 27 through March 2.

SECO International 2009 will be held March 4 through March 8, 2009, again at the Georgia World Congress Center.

Lord said future goals for SECO include expanding Spanish-language programs, and enhancing the event's online presence. "We also want to increase the number of associate and international attendees," he added.

At a ceremony during this year's event, SECO recognized 28 optometrists for successfully completing the SECO Scholar Program, a two-year, in-depth program focusing on ocular disease that was designed to help ODs hone their disease assessment and treatment skills.



Bill Lord, OD

Networking events during SECO International 2008 included a kick-off reception, the "Atlantic Station Triathlon" and the closing ceremonies celebration featuring the classic rock band America.

SECO International, which dates back to 1924, is produced annually by a wholly owned subsidiary of the Southern

Council of Optometrists (SoCO), which encompasses more than 5,500 member ODs in 12 states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. The Armed Forces Optometric Society (AFOS) is an affiliate member of SoCO. ■

## Luxottica Gets More Aggressive With EyeMed Managed Vision

MASON, Ohio—Luxottica Group's Luxottica Retail division is marketing its EyeMed Vision Care managed-vision operations more aggressively in 2008, according to Kerry Bradley, Luxottica Retail's chief operating officer. Plans include EyeMed's first direct-to-employee marketing program, launching this year. "We've decided to really unleash EyeMed and get competitive in the market," Bradley said.

Speaking during Luxottica's recent Investor Day event, Bradley said EyeMed started this year with 23 million funded insured lives, up 8 percent over the same time in 2007. "And we expect 2009 to be a record year, based on early results," Bradley said. He characterized EyeMed as the second-largest provider of managed vision plans.

EyeMed has established relationships with major insurance players such as Aetna, Humana, Wellpoint and others, and is also selling vision plans directly to

employers such as the state governments of New York, Indiana and Illinois as well as American Express, Verizon, JP Morgan and others. In addition, the company is offering vision discounts to members of AAA and AARP through exclusive relationships with those groups, and is adding discount eyewear plans (generally offering a discount of about 30 percent) to HMOs with insured eye exams, Bradley said.

This year, EyeMed is also working with some of its employer clients to promote the concept of vision care directly to those companies' employees. In a new program now rolling out, teams of EyeMed "field managers" will meet with employees to inform them about their vision benefits; more than 1,000 site visits are planned, Bradley noted.

"At one location, we booked 19 exams for a Pearle Vision store on the spot," he said. "We'll do more of that."

—Cathy Ciccolella

## EYECARE NEWS

### WORLD CONFERENCE ON OPTOMETRIC GLOBALIZATION PLANNED FOR APRIL 11-13 IN LONDON

LONDON—Hosted by the World Council of Optometry (WCO) and the European Council of Optometry and Optics (ECOO) in conjunction with the College of Optometrists, the second World Conference on Optometric Globalization (WCOG2) will be held here from April 11 to 13.

Organizers say the meeting has been designed to appeal to leaders from professional organizations, governmental agencies, the ophthalmic industry, regulatory boards, educational institutions, accreditation agencies, public health organizations and non-governmental organizations throughout the world. The conference features five sessions addressing the political, humanitarian and commercial aspects of the development of effective, efficient policies and delivery care systems that improve visual health.

International speakers from a wide range of organizations will address the conference, including senior representatives from the International Centre for Eyecare Education, the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness and the World Health Organization.

Said Robert Chappell, OD, the WCO's president, "The impact of globalization on optometry as goods, services, people, knowledge and information move increasingly quickly and freely around the world and cannot be underestimated. WCOG2 will give those of us involved in optometry at any level the opportunity to discuss some of these issues and to share our thinking so that the profession is well-positioned to meet the demands in a changing world."

The ECOO's spring meeting will also take place here April 10 and 11. For more information on WCOG2, visit [www.optometrytomorrow.com](http://www.optometrytomorrow.com).

### AOA PARAOPTOMETRIC SECTION OFFERS LIBRARY OF EDUCATION MODULES

ST. LOUIS—The American Optometric Association's (AOA) paraoptometric section has put together a Library of Education Modules, consisting of six education modules on specific topics in audio PowerPoint format.

Each module offers an option to test for continuing education credits; successful completion of the test is worth one credit hour. The processing fee for CE credit hours is \$10 for AOA members, \$25 for non-members.

Topics of the education modules are:

- Practice Management 101
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Ophthalmic Dispensing
- Special Procedures
- Soft Contact Lens wear and Care
- ABCs of Optical Dispensing

When sold separately these modules are \$40 each for members and \$55 each for non-members. For a limited time only, the AOA paraoptometric section is offering the entire Library of Education Modules for \$200 for members, \$300 for non-members.

For more information, visit [www.aoa.org](http://www.aoa.org), or e-mail to [PS@aoa.org](mailto:PS@aoa.org). ■

## LAUNCHES

# Charmant Bows Decorative Titanium

By Deirdre Carroll  
Associate Editor

MORRIS PLAINS, N.J.—Charmant launches their brand new Decorative Ladies Titanium collection just in time for Vision Expo East.

“As a leader of titanium in the industry, there were segments of the market we weren’t successfully fulfilling,” said Dennis Davis, vice president of sales for Charmant USA. “We used to do well with

ladies titanium but we kind of got away from the more decorative type a little bit, so we really wanted to put emphasis back on it. We feel that the minimalistic look has plateaued and people are now looking more for fashion and design in their frames.”

Elegant, sophisticated, meticulously crafted are words the company uses to describe the new styles offered in the Charmant Titanium Collection. The design inspiration for the three style series

**“As a leader of titanium in the industry, there were segments of the market we weren’t successfully fulfilling. We feel that the minimalistic look has plateaued and people are now looking more for fashion and design in their frames.”**

**—Dennis Davis, Charmant**



The 10828 (top) and the 10829 (bottom) from Charmant’s new Decorative Ladies Titanium collection.



was the incorporation of a common theme while retaining the individuality of each piece. The main theme in the series is a “hammered toned” effect which appears on the temples in various ways. Differing approaches were used to characterize this detail on each of the styles.

Model 10828, available in brown, gold and pink, offers the hammered effect in an animal print-like pattern which transitions from the end piece to the temple paired with a modern milled front in a 51-17 eye size.

Classically elegant, the 10829 style, in brown, gold, purple and rose, is offered with intricate temple detailing in a two-tone gold and silver accent reminiscent of Roman coins and is a true statement piece available in two eye-sizes, 50-17 and 52-17. The 10830, in brown, gold, rose and silver, is a soft round lens shape with an opened end piece in a 49-17 and 51-17 eye size.

A counter display is available which highlights the decorative temple designs. Made of pure titanium, the frames are light, strong, durable and allergy-free and each style in the series is priced to the dispenser at \$99. ■

## SECOND LOOK

### Hilco Introduces Modular SunPOD



The Modular SunPOD display system from Hilco.

PLAINVILLE, Mass.—Hilco has created a new modular SunPOD, a comprehensive merchandising system for Leader Rimless SunClips.

The modular SunPOD system gives dispensers more display and storage flexibility with a compact yet expandable system to grow Leader Rimless SunClips sales. The SunPOD provides an attractive and informative POP display option while maintaining a high level of organization to keep inventory management effortless and fitting and adjusting tools at your fingertips.

Hilco’s two-unit Modular SunPOD features the most popular shapes and sizes of Leader Rimless SunClips with AR coated polarized lenses and each included Leader Rimless SunClip comes with a deluxe carrying case and micro-fiber cleaning cloth. The top presentation unit of the Modular SunPOD gives dispensers the flexibility to display multiple POP messages and organize the most popular Leader Rimless SunClips. The bottom storage unit of the Modular SunPOD stores SunClip deluxe carrying cases, adjusting tools, and a fitting guide to make selling and dispensing Leader Rimless SunClips easier.

The new Modular SunPOD from Hilco is priced to the dispenser at \$399.99. ■

## SECOND LOOK

### McGee Unveils “Uniquely Yours” Ophthalmic Collection

MARIETTA, Ga.—The McGee Group has announced two new designs in the Vera Bradley “Uniquely Yours” Ophthalmic Collection, the VB-3023 and the VB-3024.

The VB-3023 is a full rim hand-made acetate frame with a rounded rectangle eyeshape. This attractive design features the Mod Floral Pink and Kensington Vera Bradley patterns on the inside of both temples with metal accents and a laser etched Vera Bradley logo on both temple tips.

The VB-3024 is a semi rimless metal plastic combination with a shallow rectangle eyeshape. This design introduces molded floral designs inspired by the Vera Bradley Mod Floral Pink Blue and Kensington patterns. This frame has a laser etched Vera Bradley logo on both temple tips and adjustable nose pads.

All Vera Bradley frames include coordinating cases and are priced to the dispenser at \$59.95. ■



The VB-3023 and the VB-3024, both with coordinating cases, from the Vera Bradley Collection by McGee.



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## LAUNCHES

# A&A Optical Introduces XXL Sun

By Deirdre Carroll  
Associate Editor

The Devil Ray (top) and the Nugget (bottom) from XXL's new line of sunwear for the fit challenged male.



DALLAS—A&A Optical unveils XXL Sun, the new sun line for men from XXL Eyewear.

“XXL Sun is such a natural extension for the XXL line,” said Rodney Hayes, executive vice president of A&A Optical.

“It is true to the spirit of XXL providing fit, comfort, selection and, with both CR39 UV400 lenses and Polarized UV 400 lenses available in all models, versatility. Styling and function are not sacrificed for antiquated optical limits, while the needs of eyecare professionals are conveniently answered as well. Once again, style aware, fit challenged males and their eyecare professionals find their home in XXL Sun.”

XXL Sun satisfies what the fit challenged male consumer has been search-

**“XXL Sun is such a natural extension for the XXL line. Once again, style aware, fit challenged males and their eyecare professionals find their home in XXL Sun.”**  
—Rodney Hayes, A&A Optical



ing for; great fit, enhanced comfort, longer temples, ample head space and style versatility. The initial launch collection includes four styles; the Cowboy, Devil Ray, Dolphin and Nugget, each available with CR39 UV400 lenses or UV400 polarized lenses.

The Cowboy, available in black or gun, is a classic metal featuring an understated, sport inspired rectangular shape, with rubber temple tips that ensure comfort and stay put performance in size 67-18-140.

The Devil Ray, in black or silver, is a double bar metal style with an exaggerated, elongated rectangular eye shape, curved to hug the face for a very mod-

ern, elegant, yet sporty look with textured rubber temple tips in size 68-17-135. The Nugget, in black or tortoise acetate, is a sleek, sporty double laminate wrap around style accented with a metal bar detail on the temples in size 67-18-140. The Dolphin, in black and gun, is a clean line metal, incorporating simplicity in style with a softened rectangular shape and tapered temples in size 66-18-135.

POP materials include a 12-piece rotor display, logo plaque and counter cards. Each frame comes with a new sunwear case and is priced to the dispenser from \$52.95 to \$69.95. ■

## SECOND LOOK

## Kenmark Releases Vibrant New Designs in the Thalia Collection



Style Cielo in brown (top) and black (bottom) from the Thalia Eyewear collection from Kenmark.

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—The Kenmark Group has added six new frames to its Thalia Eyewear collection.

The new optical styles offer fashion forward designs for women seeking a hint of style and flair. Each design presents angular shapes in vibrant colors with decorative temples.

The Anillos metal nylon rimless frame has a round

metal endpiece and zyl two-dimensional diamond patterned temples and is available in three colors: black, brown and gold.

The Cielo rectangular shaped rimless frame has a multi-angular zyl temple with small metal rivets and is available in an array of colors.

The Diversion chunky zyl frame has a rich color-contrasting laminated endpiece and temples.

The Misterio zyl frame with rectangular shaped front combined with angular multi-laminated temples reveals an exciting color-contrasting motif in three colors.

The Nectar angular shaped front features a round metal endpiece and zyl two-dimensional diamond patterned temples.

The Sueno stainless steel front features multi-laminated zyl temples with metal rivets for a unique look available in four colors: black, brown, gold, and violet.

Each frame in the Thalia Eyewear Collection from Kenmark includes a signature red eyewear case and is priced to the dispenser at \$49.95. ■

## SECOND LOOK

## Viva Introduces “Leopard Ladies” from Magic Clip



Styles M 356 in burgundy with gray lens clip on (top) and M 357 in brown with brown lens clip on (bottom) from the Magic Clip “Leopard Ladies” grouping by Viva International.

SOMERVILLE, N.J.—Viva International has unveiled “Leopard Ladies,” a new women’s optical series from Magic Clip, available in three styles: M 356, M 357, and M 358, that feature modern eyeshapes.

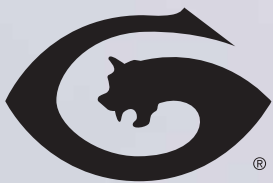
A polarized magnetic clip instantly transforms these graceful styles into fashion-forward sunglasses.

The Magic Clip “Leopard Ladies” is available in three colors: black with a gray lens clip on, burgundy with gray lens clip on, and satin brown with brown lens on clip.

Playful handmade plastic temples highlight animal print inserts with rhinestone accents creating a sophisticated look. Semi-rimless lenses and flat metal front detailing define these trendy styles.

The new “Leopard Ladies” collection from Magic Clip by Viva International features spring hinge temples for maximum durability and are priced to the dispenser at \$79.95. ■





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### SECOND LOOK

#### Fendi Offers New Styles for Spring '08

MELVILLE, N.Y.—Fendi and Marchon unveil their Spring 2008 eyewear collection.

The first of four ophthalmic styles, the F752M, highlights the Fendi Forever logo, a modern take on the Fendi Double “F” logo, on each endpiece of this classic men’s frame. The combination style, available in gunmetal, military green, midnight blue or gold, has a metal front with streamlined temples. The F721, available in black, tortoise, orchid and strawberry, features Fendi’s double “F” pattern redesigned into the “Mini Logo” treatment on both temples with metal endpieces engraved with a vertical Fendi logo.

The F738R, part of the new Fendi signature Loveletter collection inspired by an envelope styled handbag, comes in shiny palladium or sunflower. Fendi is spelled out in a bold geometric pattern on each temple highlighted with crystals. The F732R features the classic double “F” logo with both temples showcasing perforated “F’s” in a dotted pattern and metal endpieces with rhinestone embellishment. The rectangle combination frame is available in black, shiny palladium, chestnut, garnet and golden beauty.

The highlight of the new sun styles is the FS500. Inspired by the Spring ‘08 runway collection, the “F” logo pattern is designed with fine grained cork embellishment on both temples. The feminine silhouette, an 8-base injected zyl, is available in black, white and brown havana.

The Fendi styles from Marchon are priced to the dispenser from \$112.50 to \$185. ■■



(L-R) The F752M, F721, F738R and F732R optical styles from Fendi and Marchon for Spring '08.

### SECOND LOOK

#### Wiley X Introduces Their Women’s, Men’s Street Series Sunglasses

LIVERMORE, Calif.—Wiley X Eyewear has introduced its new Women’s and Men’s Street Series sunglasses, developed to combine fashionable design, comfortable fit and superior eye protection.

The women’s series represents the company’s expansion into the women’s fashion eyewear category. Among the four combinations available are cotton candy frames with coral pink lenses and red leopard frames offset by smoke lenses. Each of the models are built from tough, lightweight TR90 grilamid and feature optical quality lenses that are impact resistant, scratch resistant and provide 100 percent UVA and UVB protection — exceeding ANSI Z87.1 safety and ANSI Z80.3 optical standards.



The Dalila sunglass from Wiley X’s new Women’s Street Series.

The Ashley comes in two color options, a gloss black frame with smoke lens or gloss brown fade with bronze brown lens.

The new Wiley X Men’s Street Series comes in three styles, each available with Wiley X’s advanced lens polarization. All models feature ANSI-certified, high velocity, high mass impact frames constructed of TR-90 grilamid and Wiley X’s optical quality, eight-layer lenses that provide 100 percent UVA and UVB protection. The Plasma is a thick and edgy frame with HVP Selenite polycarbonate lenses in gloss leopard brown with bronze brown lenses or a gloss black with polarized smoke lenses.

The sunglasses are priced to the dispenser from \$40 to \$70. ■■



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**SECOND LOOK**

## Allison Presents New Styles in the Dunhill Collection

PADOVA, Italy- Allison SpA releases tk new styles in the Dunhill collection for men.

Positioned as the choice of the thinking man, Dunhill Eyewear is designed for the man who loves speed and has a passion for cars and engines. It is performance eyewear that does not sacrifice lightness, ergonomics or quality and embraces sophistication and function.

Elegant simplicity, refined lines and subtle details express the Dunhill style. Optical frame highlights include titanium in black, brown and burgundy, in polished or matt versions, paired with geometric frame fronts accentuated by faceted sides. Square palladium, in black or red gold, with acetate tips in contrasting colors hide the right angles of the Dunhill "d." The definite profile an acetate model with simple, clean lines, comes in havana, transparent gray and opaline khaki colors, which reveal the brand is capable of following the new chromatic needs of the male consumer.

Logos are present, but discrete and never invasive. The logo is a symmetric geometric module that and recalls the Op Art of the Seventies.

The collection's sunglasses are the perfect companions for leisure time and sports. Smoked, mirrored or Roviex lenses are shaded in an injected shiny black or opaque blue mask. Further still, the "d" logo inscribed in an obvious enamel circle or the small, micro-drilled plates recalls the traditional Dunhill perforated sports driving glove.

The Dunhill collection from Allison SpA is priced to the dispenser between \$95 and \$140 for ophthalmic, and \$160 for sun. ■■



The DU071 optical style (top) and the DU544 sun style (bottom) from Dunhill by Allison SpA.

**SECOND LOOK**

## Match Eyewear Launches Float Milan Sunwear

MINEOLA, N.Y.—Match Eyewear will introduce for the first time at Vision Expo East the Float Milan Sunwear collection with six to eight new styles.

"We designed sunglasses that would maintain our philosophy of great styles, perfect fit and an added value for our customers and the consumer," said Ethan Goodman, president of Match Eyewear. "We have successfully accomplished this with the use of polarized lenses in our high fashion Float Milan brand."

In addition to releasing over 30 new ophthalmic styles, Float Milan will release its sunwear collection built on clean, classic designs, along with the technical addition of polarized lenses for added sun protection. The Float Milan collection features true Italian style and an upscale, sophisticated, tailored look. The feminine styles with added polarization are designed to appeal to the most discriminating fashion conscious woman, while the masculine metals and acetates, with clean lines and the perfect touch of added temple treatments, and accent the addition of polarized lenses.

With a selection of classic aviators, chic wraps, and oversized shields, in rich colorations, the look combines, understated elegance with modern flair to appeal to the masses for both men and women, age 20 to 50.

Additional styles will be introduced in June 2008 and the new sunwear collection from Float Milan is priced to the dispenser between \$65 and \$75. ■■



The FH 7222 (left) and the FH7111 (right) from Float Milan's new sunwear collection by Match Eyewear.

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## SECOND LOOK

### Nine West Celebrates 10 Years in Optical

PARSIPPANY, N.J.—Nine West and Sàfilo celebrate the 10-year anniversary of Nine West Eyewear, and the 30th anniversary of the brand itself, with the release of new styles, an updated logo and a new merchandising program. These new developments all reinforce Nine West's brand message of being of the moment, with a fresh image and lends consistency throughout Nine West's 1,035 global

We have added sunglasses, girls' optical frames, and are now updating our optical displays, in keeping with the modernized logo and brand image."

**"We are extremely proud that both our optical and sunwear lines consistently offer incredible design, function and quality."**  
—Fred Allard, Nine West



The new Elegant sunglasses from Nine West and Sàfilo.

locations in 61 countries.

"Not only is Nine West celebrating a 30th anniversary this year but we also continue to evolve as a fashion leader. I am thrilled to be celebrating a 10th anniversary in eyewear with Sàfilo USA," said Fred Allard, creative director of Nine West. "We are extremely proud that both our optical and sunwear lines consistently offer incredible design, function and quality. And, as our brand continues to expand, so have our offerings in optical.

The Nine West goal is to satisfy style chameleons' cravings for diverse, sexy, fresh fashion, that is on trend, at attainable prices. To that end, the Nine West Eyewear collection has been produced under license by Sàfilo USA since Spring 1999 and according to VisionWatch, a study by Jobson/VC, is the number one optical brand among women in terms of brand share in units for 2007.

This month, 11 new ophthalmic styles will be released. They include nine styles for adult females and two for tween girls. Two come in acetate, while the rest are offered in metal/plastic combinations. Additionally, four new sunglass styles, three plastics and one metal, will also be added to the collection, some with polarized lenses. The collection is priced to the dispenser at \$44 to \$59

for ophthalmic and \$43 to \$52 for sun.

Nine West has updated its look as well, having recently introduced a brand new logo and merchandising display program for optical customers. The new "9" Nine West icon features multiple 9s and can be found on select new frames styles, as well as the new logo plaque and 36-place floor rotator. Developed to meet retailers' needs, the modern, new fixture program offers a 2-place display, 6-place in-counter display, 6-place on-counter display and 18-place rotator display, in predominately white with accents of black. ■■



New display pieces commemorate Nine West's 10th anniversary and showcase the new "9" logo.

## SECOND LOOK



Go Go Gingham, style BJ068 in cherry (top), Gotta Love Gingham, style BJ069 in raven (center) and Gorgeous in Gingham, style BJ070, in violet from Betsey Johnson for Legacie.

NEW YORK—Legacie releases three new eyewear groupings in the Betsey Johnson Collection for Spring.

For this season, Johnson goes back to her roots, sourcing ideas from her own archives, for styles that range from ging-

### Betsey Johnson and Legacie Release Spring Additions

ham-inspired in the Gingham group, to glitter-esque in Stardust, to dance focused in Tutu, featuring seven new optical styles and three new sunglasses.

Mirroring looks from the designers' Spring runway show, the classic gingham pattern has been revamped and applied using a variety of new treatments in the Gingham group. Three of the styles in this grouping feature a ruffle shaped temple.

Glitter has always played a big role in Betsey Johnson's design sensibility and Stardust, revisits the glitz and glamour of Studio 54. Using novel applications, glitter appears to have been dusted all over these frames.

All of the temples in the Tutu group are modeled after the tulle dresses that are ubiquitous in all of Betsey's runway collections. A tulle inspired pattern adorns optical styles, Tutu Sweet, Tutu Cute and Tutu Much Sun. Available in a variety of sweet colors; these understated styles satisfy the punk rock sensibility of the Betsey aesthetic.

The last new introduction is the mod oval optical frame in titanium, Drama Queen 2, part of the popular Lashes grouping.

These new styles from Betsey Johnson for Legacie are priced to the dispenser between \$79 to \$99. ■■



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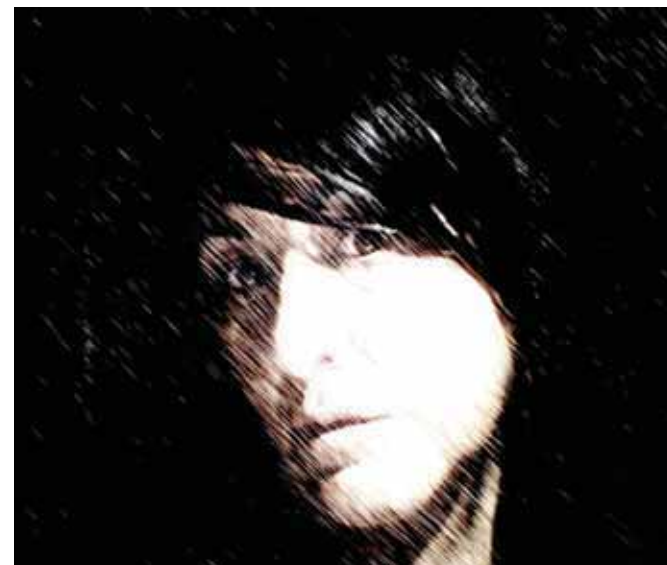
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# fashion F.Y.EYE

By Deirdre Carroll

company, driven by Perreira's inspired designs, has established itself as one that defines style and elegance with accounts in fashion Meccas like Fred Segal, Barneys, Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue, Bergdorf Goodman, Jeffrey New York and Davante. Perreira's ever-evolving body of knowledge and keen sensibilities have garnered her much acclaim and respect within the industry and her designs have graced the faces of a veritable "Who's Who" of Hollywood and fashion royalty. As F.Y.Eye learned, with such a stellar pedigree, it's not hard to imagine Perreira becoming luxury eyewear's next great super star.

Patty Perreira is an eyewear designer to the bone. She's worked on collections for Prada, Miu Miu, Jil Sander and Vera Wang, but it was during her 17 years at Oliver Peoples that her passion for design and unique vision grew. During her tenure there she helped to elevate the status of the brand, as well as bring Paul Smith Spectacles and Mosley Tribes to market. Then in 2007, Perreira, along with Bill Barton, the former president of Oliver Peoples, started their own luxury eyewear line, Barton Perreira. In less than two years, the



**1** What are the most important influences on your design work?  
**Everything I love...jewelry, architecture, nature, Jamaica, cars, motorcycles. Basically, I find inspiration in everything.**

**2** What excites you most about design?  
**The entire process—from conception of an idea to all the steps in between. When I have the final product in my**

**hand and it looks and feels as I imagined it, it is very rewarding.**

**3** Describe the ultimate Barton Perreira man and woman.  
**Confident, stylish individuals who appreciate quality and design. They don't need logos to validate their status or identity.**

**4** What's been the greatest challenge in interpreting your design

philosophy or perspective into an eyewear line?

**Having the confidence in myself to believe I could do it and then getting such an amazing response. I do not have the words to express my gratitude for all of the love and support I have received.**

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

**I am very proud of the quality. I think it is beautifully made and I feel my expertise in every shape and color. I also love the snakeskin and leopard detailing on the Emmanuelle sunglass, as well as the mesh grilles on the Acheron and Swindler.**

**6** What is the best advice anyone ever gave you?  
**"Don't bury your thoughts, put your vision to reality," from Bob Marley. ■**

## SECOND LOOK

### Haggar Eyewear Introduces New Urban Eyewear Line for Men



**Style H201 (top), H203 (center), and H206 (bottom) frames from Haggar Eyewear by i-dealoptics.**

DALLAS—Haggar Eyewear, manufactured under license by i-dealoptics, adds a rugged element to their 2008 men's eyewear line.

The 200-series focuses on seven sleek edgy looks that highlight hot temple designs. Two full rim looks, the H200 and H201, start off the collection with bold rectangles that showcase cut-out and split-temple elements. The H202 has an acetate front with stainless temples while the H203 is acetate with classic metal accents adjacent to the end piece.

Rounding out the collection are two semi-rimless ophthalmic frames and a drill mount style. The H204 and the H205 feature stainless steel fronts and thicker acetate temples.

The H206 has distinctive two-tone colorations and cut-out shapes on the temples that mirror the lens shape. Keeping these contemporary looks timeless are neutral shades of black, brown, and gunmetal.

Haggar Eyewear is priced to the dispenser at \$22.99. ■

## SECOND LOOK

### Fusion Eyewear Unveils New Styles from Jean Paul Gaultier



**The titanium/acetate VJP553J with dragon temples (top) and the ladies VJP079J with hand detail (bottom) from Jean Paul Gaultier Eyewear.**

PLAINVIEW, N.Y.—Fusion Eyewear will reveal the newest limited edition releases in the Jean Paul Gaultier eyewear collection at the upcoming Vision Expo East.

Made in Japan of pure titanium, there are six ophthalmic and five sun models including a show stopping sculptured dragon frame and unique "hand" frame.

Style VJP080J and VJP553J feature dragon temples with a beautiful Swarovski crystal embedded in the body of the dragon.

The workmanship and attention to detail makes the temples seem like pieces of sculpture. The frames are made of lightweight titanium and titanium/acetate combinations in a selection of four colors each.

Made from titanium and acetate, the men's VJP078J and the women's VJP079J, both rimless styles, feature hands "holding" on the lens. Reminiscent of authentic Gaultier, the unique sculptured hand frames come in a selection of four colors each and the attention to detail is so complete that the ladies version even incorporates a Swarovski bracelet on the right temple around the hand.

The new limited release frames in the Jean Paul Gaultier collection are priced to the dispenser between \$295 to \$475. ■



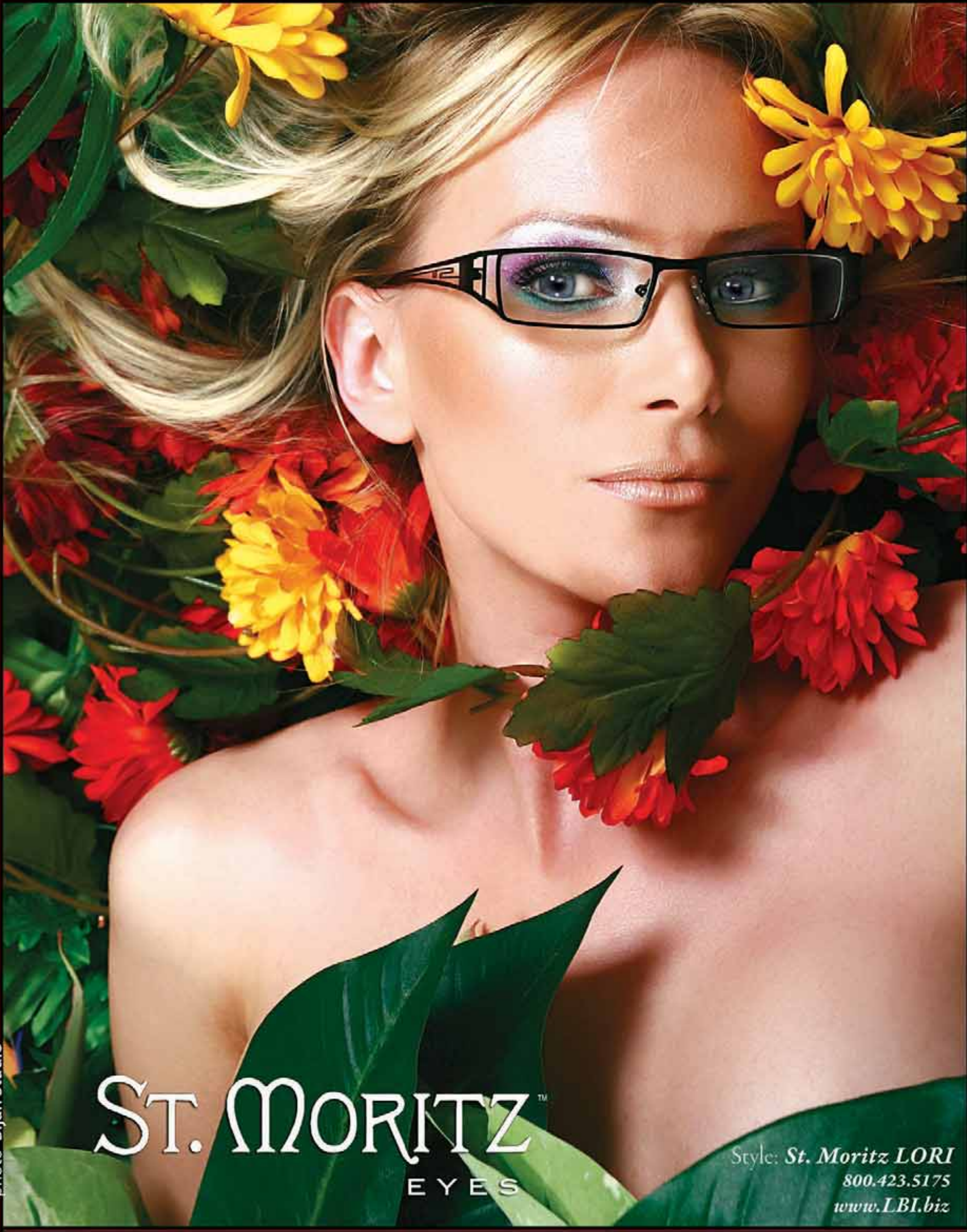


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## CONTACT LENSES

## CooperVision Debuts ClearSight 1-Day Toric

FAIRPORT, N.Y.—CooperVision has introduced ClearSight 1-Day Toric lenses, the latest addition to the CooperVision daily disposable product line. The lenses target patients with astigmatism with the health benefits and convenience of a daily disposable.

With the debut of the ClearSight 1-Day Toric, Cooper now offers toric contact lenses in all modalities, reinforcing its Total Toric Solution, offering ECPs the widest range of toric products and parameters in the industry, the company pointed out.

“As the world’s number one toric lens market, ClearSight 1-Day Toric provides greater stability, outstanding comfort and excellent visual acuity with all the benefits of the daily disposable modality,” said James Gardner, director of marketing.

The lens features a uniform, horizontal iso-thickness, with a wide ballast band maximizing optimal orientation and more effective lens-eyelid interaction which enhances stability while blinking.

The ClearSight 1-Day Toric features a 55 percent water content material,

oculicon D, and are available in sphere powers of plano to -6.00D in 0.25D steps, -6.50D, and -7.00D; a base curve of 8.7mm; and a diameter of 14.5 mm.

The lenses are packaged as five-lens strip blisters in 30-lens cartons.

“No other toric modality offers eyecare practitioners a better opportunity to increase practice profitabili-

ty,” Gardner also noted. “Daily disposables’ incredibly high rate of compliance means more regular reorders than two-week or monthly lenses,” he said. ■



Cooper's new 1-Day Toric targets astigmatic patients.

## CIBA Increases Manufacturing for O2Optix SiHys

DULUTH, Ga.—Over the past year, CIBA Vision says it has made significant investments to increase manufacturing capacity, particularly for its silicone hydrogel lenses. This has resulted in a return to “best-in-class” customer service levels and is allowing increased speed-to-market for CIBA Vision’s

future silicone hydrogel lens innovations. As part of these investments, CIBA also implemented proprietary manufacturing process improvements, which have led, it says, to a new level of comfort and consistency for Night & Day and O2Optix lenses.

New data shows that over 96 percent

of patients now rate Night & Day high for initial comfort—an improvement of 58 percent over comfort ratings for the lenses prior to the process improvements. Additional research shows that patients' satisfaction with comfort and positive ratings for Night & Day lenses start strong and grow even stronger over time.

Ratings for O2Optix also increased, the company said, with over 92 percent of patients now rating the lens high for initial comfort. Also, a survey conducted with current O2Optix wearers found that 81 percent who had previously worn other brands of soft lenses rated O2Optix better than their prior lenses. ■

## SECOND LOOK

### Live Eyewear Launches Cocoon OverRx Sunglasses New Lens

SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif.—Live Eyewear announced today that Cocoon, the company’s patented collection of sunwear designed to be worn over prescription eyewear, will include an additional range of specialty lens tints specifically developed for the low vision market. By combining specialty low vision lens tints with a leading OverRx sunwear frame design, the new Low Vision Cocoon deliver increased benefits to those with special low vision requirements.



Low Vision Cocoon with a yellow non-polarized tint from Live Eyewear.

Low Vision Cocoon feature a comfortable fit that accommodates a wide range of prescription eyewear shapes and sizes, while providing 360° of complete protection from the elements.

Low Vision Cocoon will be launched at the International Vision Expo in April. The new specialty lens options will be available in all sizes of Cocoon with the choice of black or tortoiseshell frames.

The new Cocoon low vision non-polarized tints are available in orange, amber, yellow and mauve, which have been specially developed to protect the eyes from damaging UV light and enhance visual acuity for low vision patients.

All Cocoon include a custom designed Cocoon case, and DuraCloth and are priced to the dispenser at \$14.95. ■

## SECOND LOOK

### New Ladies Frames in Konishi Flex from Clariti



KF8519 in mountain wine (top) and the KF8521 in satin pink (bottom) from the Konishi Flex Titanium collection from Clariti Eyewear.

SANTE FE SPRINGS, Calif.—Clariti Eyewear releases two new ladies styles in the Konishi Flex Titanium collection.

Beautiful open temple work, Swarovski crystals, and subtle feminine colors are featured in the collection, features seldom found in a flex product line.

The Konishi Flex Titanium is the next generation of titanium, besides being lightweight, the line offers all the features expected from memory metal. They can be twisted, turned, bent, and even knotted without breaking. Model KF8519 comes available in mountain wine, silver, dark gun and light brown; while model KF8521 comes in satin pink, light brown, gold and light purple.

Konishi Flex Titanium frames have just the right amount of flexibility and rigidity assuring patient comfort and easy adjustment, all at premium quality and reasonable price points.

Clariti offers a two-year warranty on all Konishi Flex Titanium products and has priced the collection to the dispenser at \$69.95. ■



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## LAUNCHES

## Santinelli Intros New Entry-Level Edger

HAUPPAUGE, N.Y.—Santinelli International is introducing the Le 1000 lens edger series, the company's most affordable edging systems for entry-level and budget-conscious eyecare practitioners. This series rounds out the company's 2008 product line-up, joining the mid-range LEX Series and the flagship ME Series.

The Le 1000 features a soft grind mode and stabilized chucking pressure which protects against crazing of super-AR coated lenses and easily processes small "B" dimensions for fashion frames.



Santinelli  
Le 1000 edger

The all-gear driven mechanisms provide the highest level of accuracy and durability, according to Santinelli. The Le 1000 precisely edges all of the newest lens materials, including PPG's Trivex and polyurethane, and offers the Santinelli's Crystal Cut polish, along with quiet operation.

The Le 1000 "S" model is available with safety beveling and newly improved grooving features.

Santinelli points out that the grooving wheel's small diameter has been set at an optimal twelve degree angle, resulting in "pin-point" accuracy of the groove even on high-base curve lenses. The Le 1000 "L," without safety beveling and grooving, offers additional savings.

"All three configurations within the LE Series provide the ease-of-use, accuracy and quality that Santinelli International is known for—at a very affordable price point," said company president and CEO Gerard Santinelli. ■

## Cotrans Open New Lab



The Cotran brothers in their new lab in East Syracuse, N.Y. From left to right are Ralph, Robert and Ron Cotran.

EAST SYRACUSE, N.Y.—The Cotran brothers are back in the wholesale lab business. This month, Ralph, Robert and Ron Cotran are opening U.S. Optical, a full-service lab in East Syracuse, N.Y., not far from their previous lab, Optogenics. The three brothers, who founded Optogenics in 1986 and sold it to Essilor in 1999, left that lab a year ago and waited until their non-compete agreements with Essilor expired before launching their new venture.

"It's re-energized us to have own wholesale lab," said Ralph, who at 54 is the oldest brother. "We had excellent relations with Essilor, but we wanted to get entrepreneurial."

The brothers have clearly divided areas of responsibility. Ralph is in charge of marketing and sales. Ron, 52, is in charge of production as well as the lab's

computer systems. Robert Cotran, 49, handles finance and splits customer service duties with Ralph.

Housed in a newly renovated, 12,000-square foot facility, U.S. Optical specializes in producing free form and digitally surfaced progressives such as the Seiko Succeed Internal Free-Form and Shamir Autograph. The lab also distributes Hoya and Kodak Unique lenses from Signet Armorlite.

"We're going to concentrate on free form, but we will do all progressives and high-end lenses. We won't do any glass," said Ralph. Lens production is highly automated. "We installed a SatisLoh automatic line for free form, including a VFT Ultra generator with conveyor and UltraFlex polisher," said Ron. "Because of the automation, we only have about 15 employees."

AR lenses are produced in a state-of-the-art Carl Zeiss coating center. The lab offers 24-hour service on all in-house free form and digitized lenses with AR coating.

The Cotrans see the opening of their East Syracuse lab as the first step in a network of labs.

"Our goal is to also try to open a couple of more locations for U.S. Optical specializing in a wide range of free form lenses," said Ralph. "We would try to open one in the South and also one in the West. This is a five-year goal." ■

## Pech Optical Joins Global Optics

GREEN BAY, Wis.—Pech Optical of Sioux City, Iowa has joined Global Optics, a buying and marketing group for labs. Founded in 1989, Pech Optical is an independently owned wholesale optical laboratory. Since the company's inception by its president, Robert W.

Pech, it has grown from 44 employees to over 260 employees who are responsible for approximately 2,100 Rx orders per day. Pech Optical was ranked the second largest independent lab in Vision Monday's 2007 Top Labs Report, with estimated Rx sales of \$31.7 million. ■

## Optical Synergies Hosts Annual Conference



Photos by Christie Walker

SAN DIEGO—Optical Synergies, the wholesale lab buying group, hosted its annual meeting here last month. The event, which featured educational seminars and vendor's exhibits, drew 120 attendees.

Pictured at the meeting, clockwise, are Optical Synergies' Bruce Brady, who welcomed labs and vendors. Vision Council of America president Ed Greene presented a state-of-the-industry program. Attendees listened to Thomas F. Puckett of HPC Puckett & Co., who discussed the financial attributes used when evaluating an optical laboratory. Hal Walker (l), Superior Optical, Ocean Springs, Miss. and Phil Whitaker, Essilor IDD, chatted during a break between speakers. ■

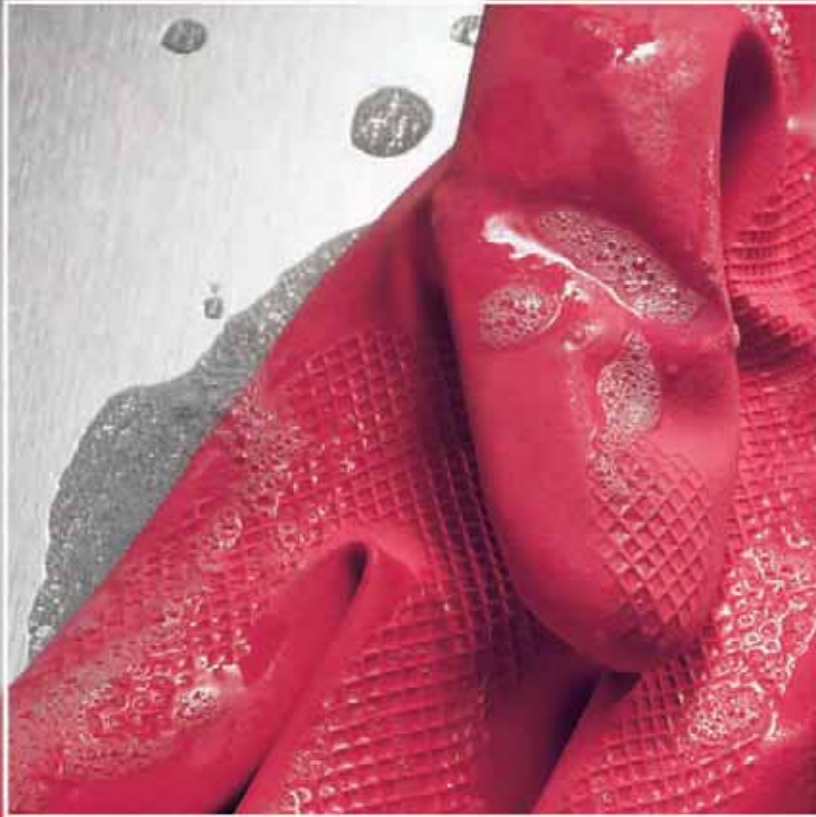
## OLA Adds Seven New Members

FAIRFAX, Va.—The Optical Laboratories Association (OLA) has expanded its membership roster with the addition of four new laboratory members and three new associate (supplier) members. The laboratory members are Capitol Optical of Olympia, Wash., Value Eyecare Network of Ronkonkoma, N.Y., Kaban Optical of Palm Springs, Calif.

and PixelOptics of Roanoke, Va. The associate members are IODA, S.r.l. of Padova, Italy, R&R Solutions of Gravette, Ark. and Yamamoto – Kogaku Co. of Osaka, Japan.

Including the seven new members, OLA has 332 wholesale and retail lab members representing 585 labs, plus 67 associate members. ■





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Winter 08	Low	Lower	Lowest
<b>Bausch &amp; Lomb</b>	<b>1 to 5</b>	<b>6 to 10</b>	<b>11 &amp; Over</b>
PureVision	*26.00	*25.25	*24.50
SOFLENS 38	11.95	11.75	11.25
SOFLENS 59	9.25	8.95	8.75
SOFLENS MULTIFOCAL	28.95	28.75	27.95
<b>CIBA VISION</b>	<b>1 to 5</b>	<b>6 to 10</b>	<b>11 &amp; Over</b>
COLOR BLENDS	23.95	23.75	21.95
FOCUS 1-2 Week	13.95	12.95	10.95
FOCUS MONTHLY	15.95	14.25	13.25
FOCUS NIGHT & DAY	41.75	40.75	38.50
FOCUS DAILY 90 PK	33.95	32.95	31.95
02 OPTIX	15.75	15.25	14.75

Winter 08	Low	Lower	Lowest
<b>CooperVision</b>	<b>1 to 5</b>	<b>6 to 10</b>	<b>11 &amp; Over</b>
EXPRESSION - OPAQUE PLANO	*21.95	*20.95	*19.95
BIOMEDICS PREMIER	*15.95	*13.95	*12.25
BIOMEDICS XC, 38% & 55%	*15.95	*13.95	*12.25
FREQUENCY 55%	12.45	12.35	12.25
FREQUENCY 55% ASPHERIC	12.45	12.35	12.25
Z4 & Z6	15.95	13.95	11.95
<b>Johnson &amp; Johnson</b>	<b>1 to 5</b>	<b>6 to 10</b>	<b>11 &amp; Over</b>
ACUVUE 2	13.90	13.75	13.50
ACUVUE ADVANCE	17.95	17.75	17.50
ACUVUE OASYS	22.50	21.75	21.25
<b>IMPRESSIONS COLORS</b> <small>HOT NEW ITEM</small>	19.95	19.75	18.95



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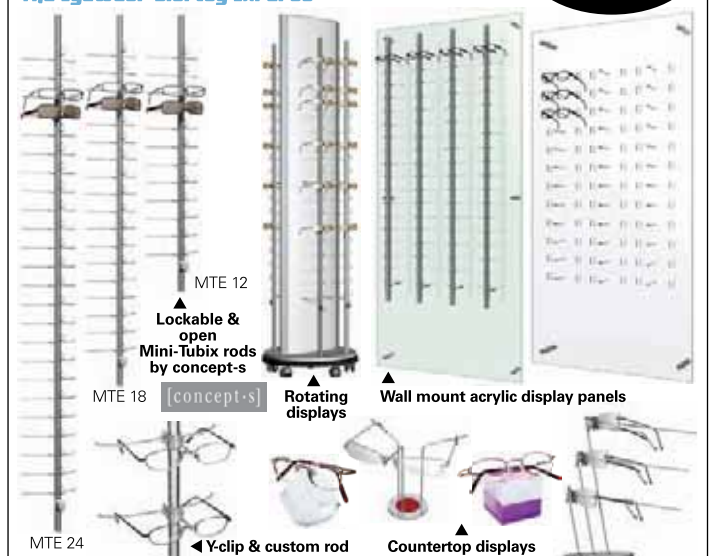
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optical

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Fax resume to **818.994.0194**  
or e-mail [maria@empireoptical.org](mailto:maria@empireoptical.org)  
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No. Hollywood, CA 91365  
[www.empireoptical.org](http://www.empireoptical.org)

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#### ■ Executive Vice President

This position reports to the President of Schneider Optical Machines in Germany. You will be responsible to meet the financial and strategic objectives of Schneider Optical Machines in North America.

#### Your key tasks:

- Managing our business in the NAFTA region and provide leadership to meet the goals and objectives
- Develop and implement an organizational framework to achieve the established objectives
- Assume fiscal responsibility and implement controls necessary to meet financial goals
- Organize, direct and guide members of the sales and service department
- Support the sales process by assisting clients in technical and commercial issues
- Assume responsibility for all HR issues in coordination with the HR department at the parent company
- Organize, direct or guide members of the sales and service department

#### Requirements:

- No less than 5 years of experience in sales position of capital goods including P&L responsibility
- Knowledge of the ophthalmic industry
- Experience with CNC driven machine technology preferred
- Experience in relationship building with end-users as well as other distribution channels
- Proven expertise in building an effective and successful management team in a growing company
- Strong sales and customer service skills
- A verifiable, successful career track record
- Analytical, forward thinking skills that have contributed to measurable success in past positions.
- Strong communication skills, both written and verbal
- Cultural sophistication to successfully communicate with the management of the parent company
- Willingness to travel (up to 50%)

#### ■ National Sales Manager

This position reports to the Executive Vice President. You will be responsible to meet team and individual sales objectives within the ophthalmic industry of North America.

#### Your key tasks:

- Manage sales leads, prospects and customers to achieve the agreed business objectives
- Coordinate the activities of the US sales force
- Create and propose product based solutions to increase market share within designated market segments
- Provide answers to technical queries from customers in order to facilitate sales in the designated region
- Provide market feedback to assist in the shaping of future company strategy
- Propose new product developments that fulfill unrecognized opportunities within company objectives

#### Requirements:

- Three years of experience selling high-end CNC machinery preferred.
- Mechanical Engineering degree or related experience preferred
- Experience in sales or applications of related components (coating & finishing is a plus)
- Familiarity with ophthalmic industry in North America
- Strong organizational and communication skills
- Strong relationship building skills
- Track record in exceeding objectives
- Proficiency in IT related functions
- Willingness to travel extensively (up to 75%)

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All manager positions require a minimum of 1-3 years experience. Along with a salary commensurate with experience, employees receive an excellent benefit package including: paid vacation, health insurance, bonuses and a generous 401K match.

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**Jonathan Herskovitz at 972-488-8563**  
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## Help Wanted



## CAREERS

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### Progressive Addition Lens Product Manager

As a PAL Product Manager, you will be responsible for the lifecycle management of progressive addition lens (PAL) products. You will also take a leadership role in the development and execution of strategies for new PAL product launches as well as formulating and executing strategic product plans to position the products and expand market share.

This position requires a Bachelor's degree in Marketing (MBA preferred) and demonstrated expertise in the marketing and positioning of ophthalmic lens products.

### Coating Chemist

As a Coating Chemist, you will develop and test coatings and their application methods for ophthalmic products, including liquid and vacuum deposited coatings. You must have a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry or Chemical Engineering and demonstrated industry experience in developing application methods. An advanced degree is preferred.

### Senior Film Engineer

As a Senior Film Engineer, you will develop proprietary functional films (polarizing, photochromic, etc.) along with their process technologies for lenses and associated applications. You must have a Bachelor's degree in mechanical or chemical engineering and demonstrated development experience in web handling, coating, drying, laminating and/or curing processes.

### Senior Polymer Scientist

As a Senior Polymer Scientist, you will be responsible for the synthesis and formulation of new chemistries for use in our functional films and laminates. These will be used for ophthalmic and other applications including photochromic, polarized, hard coatings and others. You must have a Bachelor's degree (PhD desired) and demonstrated abilities in synthesizing or formulating chemistries in urethanes and dyes.

At Vision-Ease, we appreciate the talent of our employees and have created an environment where your contributions are recognized and valued. We offer a competitive salary and benefits program.

If you are interested in learning more about Vision-Ease Lens and our employment opportunities, please visit our website at [www.vision-ease.com](http://www.vision-ease.com), click on "Careers" and apply directly on-line or, you may send your resume for consideration in any of these specific positions to [staffing@vision-ease.com](mailto:staffing@vision-ease.com).

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LENS  
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Successful candidate will possess these skills:

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Germantown, WI 53022  
E-mail: [Kris.Wendorf@satisloh.com](mailto:Kris.Wendorf@satisloh.com)  
Fax: 262-255-6002

**satisloh**

## Director of Sales North & South America

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Optical**

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- Minimum 5 years experience in the optical industry in a sales or customer contact role
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## Help Wanted

### PixelOptics, Inc., a small rapidly expanding high technology company in Roanoke, VA, is currently seeking a **Product Development Manager**

Requirements for this position include: BS or MS in Engineering, Material Science, or Physics; 10 or more years experience in an ophthalmic lens product development environment; experience in managing development work in lens design and fabrication, including tooling and material processing; compressive knowledge of the spectacle lens market; and experience and or knowledge regarding electronic products desirable. Responsibilities include: Lead and manage the design, development and early stage manufacturing of an advanced ophthalmic lens product; work closely with other team members and outsourced development partners to bring product into market; responsible for managing all designs, tooling and materials related to new lens product. This position will work closely with manufacturing and operations to ensure that inventory is ready for initial product launch.

Very competitive compensation package. Send resume and letter of introduction to PixelOptics, Inc., 2840 Hershberger Road, Suite B, Roanoke, VA 24017. Attn: Director of Legal Affairs. No phone calls please. Please visit our Web site: www.pixeloptics.com for more information on our company. EOE

## Help Wanted

### Optical Sales Representatives Wanted

Based in Watkinsville, GA. Tifosi Optics designs and distributes technologically-advanced sports optics worldwide.

**Tifosi Optics** is seeking a motivated candidate to call on existing and potential account base in their territory to promote Tifosi Optics plano and RX sunglass models. **Responsibilities:** Generate new business in territory. Increase volume and profits in territory from previous year sales in same territory and meeting or exceeding quarterly sales goals. Conduct clinics and training on Tifosi Optics product to optical staff. Position reports to National Sales Manager.

**Qualifications:** Overall knowledge of optical industry. Bring existing relationship with optical accounts and buyers to set appointments for Tifosi Optics presentations. Must have excellent communication skills and be able to communicate with inside staff on a regular basis about existing business and new prospects.

Send resume to:  
**Adam Brim**  
RX Sales Manager  
Adam@Tifosioptics.com



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# VM WHERE TO FIND IT

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## FRAMES



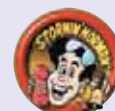
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## Anticipating Workplace Changes for 2008



Hedley Lawson, Jr.

With 2008 underway, you can anticipate another year of challenges when it comes to running a successful eyecare practice. Understanding your recruiting and retention goals, legislation and statutory mandates, financial planning and employee work-life balance issues are all key ingredients for a winning combination. Here are a few examples of changes and possible action items you may experience in the coming year.

### Employee Compensation

In 2007, salary increases hit a plateau despite a tight job market, escalating unemployment, and high turnover rates. According to various sources and surveys, salary budgets and projected average merit increases will rise slightly to an average of 4 percent for this year (excluding executive salaries). For 2008, employers are re-evaluating how and where their salary budgets should be distributed, addressing the growing challenge of balancing employee productivity and continued rising pay.

With the escalating increases associated with rising benefit costs to retain talent, employers are becoming more concerned with investing in "alternate pay" to better balance productivity and efficiency with the higher costs of doing business.

### Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance continues to be a priority for employees of all age groups. According to the 2007 *Monster Work/Life Balance Survey*, 89 percent of employees polled believe work/life balance programs, such as flextime and telecommuting, are important when evaluating a new job or even remaining with a current employer.

Not particularly surprising is the fact that the survey findings revealed that less than 30 percent of employees polled

view their employer's work/life balance initiatives as good or excellent, while 58 percent say their employer encourages too much work.

Interestingly, nearly half (44 percent) of Chief Information Officers (CIOs) surveyed said their companies' IT work force is telecommuting at a rate that is the same or higher than five years ago; only 3 percent said IT staff work remotely less frequently today than they did five years ago.

According to *Workforce Management*, the attitude of "live to work" will shift toward one of "work to live" as people devote more attention to family and life interests. More people will work from their homes, and as a result, work will become more mundane rather than all encompassing, and terms such as "employee burnout" and "workaholic" will hopefully be less common.

### As 2008 Progresses

Many of the challenges employers faced in 2007 will carry forward into 2008. Unemployment is expected to rise above 5 percent in 2008 unless states and the federal government initiate job retraining or displaced worker programs to counterbalance the growing fear associated with a recessionary economy. As such, the job market will remain tight for highly skilled employees in all but a few professions. Also, beginning this year, hundreds of thousands of Baby Boomers (76 million born 1946-1964) will begin to retire, creating the largest exodus from the work force by a single generation in history. Consequently, companies continue to reassess and better understand what their employees want in order to create new and clever means of retaining talent.

Whether it means more "non-traditional" benefits such as telecommuting or flex-time, the universal consensus for the future is that employers, including those in the optical industry, will need to be more creative and flexible in recruiting and retaining great talent. ■

Don't miss out on **Vision Monday's** e-edition of *Business Essentials* providing monthly updates on day-to-day management issues for optical ECPs and retailers. To subscribe to *Business Essentials*, go to [www.visionmonday.com](http://www.visionmonday.com), click on the *Business Essentials* button and go to the *Subscribe to Business Essentials* option in the newsletter. Current and past issues of *Business Essentials* are available by visiting the **VM** Web site at [www.visionmonday.com](http://www.visionmonday.com).





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**WHEN:** Wednesday, April 9, 2008  
**WHERE:** Bridgewaters (South Street Seaport)  
 11 Fulton Street  
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**TIME:** Registration begins at 8:00 am  
 Program is 8:30 am to 4:00 pm

**WHO SHOULD ATTEND:**  
 Senior-Level Executives of U.S. and  
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**COST:** \$245<sup>00</sup>

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## EDITORIAL

## Get Into the 'Business' of Giving



**Mary Kane**  
Executive Editor

March Madness is upon us and I'm not talking about the college basketball season. In the world of optical, now is the season for Vision Expo East and everyone is feverishly preparing for the convention, which is less than a month away.

But there's a different kind of business that goes on in optical and it's not about the bottom line. I'm talking about those charitable organizations, such as Prevent Blindness America, Give the Gift of Sight and ORBIS International, that make it possible for those in need to have access to eyecare and eyewear.

Which brings me to Oliver Foot, president of ORBIS who died last month at 61. Foot was a longtime devotee of ORBIS International, a nonprofit humanitarian organization dedicated to saving sight on a worldwide basis. He

joined the organization as executive director in 1982, its founding year, and for nearly a quarter of a century he played a vital role in ORBIS' development with a singular vision to eliminating blindness throughout the world. He personally led a team of volunteer doctors, nurses and pilots who flew to more than 80 countries aboard the ORBIS Flying Eye Hospital, literally bringing ophthalmic surgical and teaching facilities to needy patients in far flung destinations.

I had the pleasure of meeting and interviewing Foot last year as hundreds of ECPs, diplomats and business leaders gathered at the United Nations in New York to help ORBIS celebrate their 25th anniversary. I was impressed at how easily Foot could relate to a variety of people and that night was no exception as he gracefully moved through a roomful of partygoers ranging from volunteer doctors and flying crew to the President of Ethiopia and Sir Richard Branson.

He summed up his mission in life and that of the organization's when he said, "ORBIS is at the heart of what life is all about—promoting cooperation and understanding through serving others. What better way could there be to help heal our divided world?" At presstime, a successor to Foot had not been named. He will be missed.

So if you'd like to get involved in the 'business' of giving, you'll have your chance right before Expo and the ensuing madness begins. Rock musicians from the optical industry will be tuning up for a special concert on April 10 to raise funds for the Give the Gift of Sight, a charity committed to delivering clear vision to those in need. The show, billed as Eye Rock, will feature the OffAxis band along with more than 20 guest performers from the optical industry. Tickets are available online at [www.givethegiftofsight.org](http://www.givethegiftofsight.org) or can be purchased at the door of the China Club in Manhattan. ■■

## What's Online @ VisionMonday.com

## About visionmonday.com

VisionMonday.com has an innovative, new look. Content from our most recent issues is organized by topic and category, making it easy to find the information you need fast. And **VMail Extra** Subscribers have access to **VM's** comprehensive archives via a new search engine powered by Google. We have also added a downloadable PDF version of the most recent issue of **VM**.

## Slide Show

## Sun Rises for Celebs



Check out **VM's** exclusive coverage of today's hottest stars in sunglasses such as Tommy Lee Jones (left) at the Academy Awards, Independent Spirit Awards, Screen Actors Guild Awards, and the Grammys.

**Also online in Slide Show:**  
See Scenes from SECO.

## WebTV



Stay Tuned! Find what you need on **Vision Monday's WebTV**, the industry's first video network. Watch informative videos covering every facet of the eyecare industry. Current channels highlight: Scene & Heard optical editorial coverage. Optical Events, Educational Video Press Releases, Progressive Lenses, Lens Coatings & Treatments, Finishing Equipment, Frames, and Practice Management Technology.

## New &amp; Noteworthy

## VCA Reports Progress in FDA Drop Ball Talks

Get the latest about what's new in **VM's** continuing coverage of the FDA's proposed guidelines for lens impact testing. In this installment, The Vision Council of America (VCA) tells **VM** about noticeable progress in its dialogue with the FDA concerning this ongoing saga that affects all ECPs and retailers.

## Data Point

Facts, stats and data on today's eyewear market taken from Vision-Watch, a study conducted by Jobson/VCA.

## Poll

Check out **VM's** latest **Live Poll** where we ask readers, "Is the current downturn in the economic climate having an adverse affect on your optical business?" Vote and make your voice heard. The poll is on [www.visionmonday.com](http://www.visionmonday.com).

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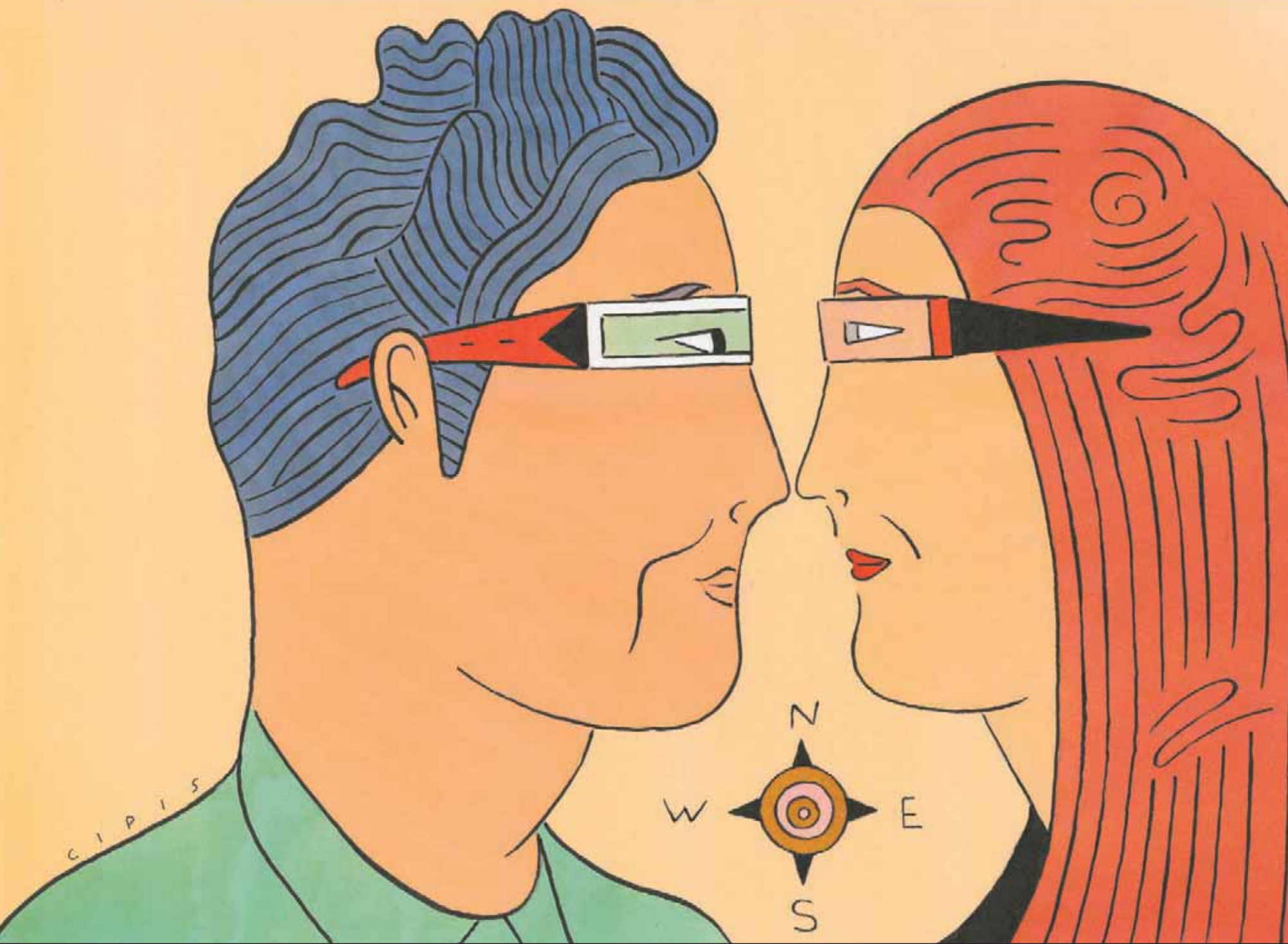
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## AMO Posts Losses for Q4, FY 2007; Plans Cost-Cutting Steps

SANTA ANA, Calif.—Still feeling the effects of last year's product recall, Advanced Medical Optics (NYSE: EYE) announced net losses for both its fourth quarter and full fiscal year 2007, and said it plans to implement cost-cutting measures including reducing its worldwide work force by about 4 percent.

The company is also lowering its forecast for 2008 revenues, based on a projected 10 percent drop in its U.S. laser vision correction procedures this year.

In FY 2007, Advanced Medical Optics' net sales reached \$1,090 million, a 9.4 percent increase (up 7.5 percent at constant currency rates). The company posted a net loss of \$192.95 million for the year,

compared to net income of \$79.5 million in fiscal 2006.

Last year's laser vision correction sales rose 69.6 percent, to \$367.8 million, the company said. But sales of eyecare products dropped 34.6 percent, to \$171 million, as a result of the recall.

In Q4, Advanced Medical Optics had net sales of \$304.6 million, up 25 percent (up 19.7 percent at constant currency rates). The company's net loss for the period increased to \$12.3 million, up from a net loss of \$7.6 million in the prior year's fourth quarter.

In 2007's Q4, AMO's laser vision revenues rose 96.8 percent, to \$101.7 million, while sales of eyecare products dropped 4.6 percent to \$50.5 million.

Jim Mazzo, Advanced Medical

Optics' chairman and chief executive officer, commented, "We remain confident in the strength of our global businesses, technologies, new product pipeline and strategy. However, after the first six weeks of 2008, we have seen the deteriorating U.S. economy negatively impact our domestic Lasik procedure volumes." As a result, Mazzo said, the company plans "staff reductions and infrastructure changes designed to reduce fixed costs, improve operating leverage and enhance long-term cash flow." Those measures include work force cutbacks totaling about 150 jobs. In addition, "AMO plans to consolidate certain operations to improve its overall facility utilization," an announcement said. ■

## FGX Sales Rise 14.9 Percent in '07

SMITHFIELD, R.I.—FGX International (NASDAQ:FGXI), a designer and marketer of non-prescription reading glasses, sunglasses and costume jewelry, released their financial results for the fourth quarter and fiscal year ended Dec. 29, 2007.

Net sales for the fourth quarter of 2007 were \$62.8 million compared to \$70 million in the fourth quarter of 2006. In the fourth quarter of 2006, FGX International reported \$18 million worth of incremental sales to a retailer for a new reading glass-

es and sunglasses program which were not anniversaried in the fourth quarter of 2007. Absent this program, sales increased \$10.8 million, led by higher overall sales of non-prescription reading glasses and sunglasses to existing retail accounts. Net income for the fourth quarter of 2007 was \$1.5 million, compared to \$5.9 million in the fourth quarter of 2006.

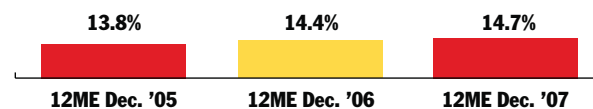
"We experienced very strong sales and earnings growth during the quarter excluding the effect of the year ago roll-out of

major new programs to a large retailer," said FGX International CEO, Alec Taylor. "This growth was primarily driven by our Foster Grant and Magnivision brands. We also had excellent gross margin improvement and we substantially reduced our debt versus the prior year."

Net sales for the full year 2007 increased 14.9 percent, from \$209.2 million in 2006 to \$240.5 million in 2007. Net income was \$4.9 million in 2007 versus a net loss of \$3 million in 2006. ■

### DATA POINT

#### Over-The-Counter Readers Gaining Ground in Vision Correction Arena



More Americans are choosing over-the-counter Readers as a form of vision correction. From the 12 months ending Dec. '05 to the 12 months ending Dec. '06, the percent of total readers wearers (age 18+) increased by 4.3 percent, going from 13.8 percent to 14.4 percent, respectively. In the 12 months ending Dec. '07 over the 12 months ending Dec. '05, the percent of Readers wearers increased by 6.5 percent, going from 13.8 percent to 14.7 percent, respectively.

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

### BY THE NUMBERS The latest figures

# 6%

Of those not using any form of vision correction even though it is needed, 7 percent stated 'I think using glasses would make my eyes worse' as the reason for not using vision correction.

# 56%

Percent of respondents that said they are 'somewhat aware' of the vision correction surgery procedures that are available.

# 12%

The percent of males ages 18+ currently wearing contact lenses any part of the time.

# 12%

Percent of sunglasses costing \$30 or more that were sold at a department store.

Source: VisionWatch – a study conducted by Jobson/VCA  
Total Annual VisionWatch Sample Size: 100,000 consumer respondents per year (ages 18+)  
Data is for the 12ME December 2007. Refractive Surgery data is for the 6ME December 2007.

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