



MESSAGE IN A PORTAL

Digital Marketing Invigorates Optical Groups' Traditional Advertising



BY JOHN SAILER / SENIOR EDITOR

Enlivened by the digital age, regional optical retailers are moving from the traditional to the electronic, linking both to have far greater impact than either alone.

Hybrid strategies that compound the expansiveness of print and broadcast with the immediacy of the internet are energizing optical groups' marketing campaigns.

As companies make this transition, it's not a case of old versus new media. Instead, optical retailers stand at the cusp, connecting earlier formats with modern techniques to drive consumers from broadcast and print to their websites and social media pages . . . and ultimately through their practice doors and into their optical dispensaries.

As new electronic formats evolve, digital marketing strategies that merge old and new marketing media are emerging as regional optical groups experiment with their effectiveness and discover their precise measurability. For example, broadcast media can encourage consumers to enter brand names into search engines,

resulting in high rankings "above the fold" on the first results page. Advertisers can coordinate pre-roll video promotions with news and weather reports to reinforce their message, generating responses that can be both counted and counted on.

The options are as endless as the creative combinations that can result from joining traditional analog formats with new digital media.

Among the new electronic marketing techniques being employed are ZIP code-specific geo-targeting that finds potential customers within a specific distance from a particular location, retargeting website visitors by reaching them with banner ads as they continue surfing the internet, videos that can be watched not only on company websites but also through video-specific platforms to inspire viewers to act, and much more.

For these and other leading regional optical groups' digital-age marketing campaigns see the following pages, where they describe their strategies and share the benefits that have resulted from distributing their messages through many of the various electronic portals available today.

More →

MESSAGE IN A PORTAL

Pre-Roll Video Coordinates Digital With Traditional

Jason Van Stone

Director of Marketing

Opticare Eye Health & Vision Centers, Inc.

Waterbury, Conn.

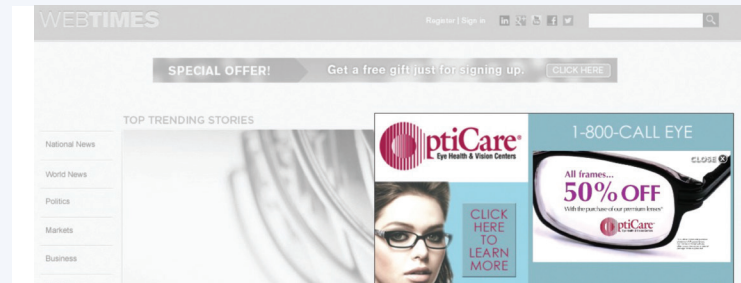
The Message: Free gifts, 50 percent off all frames, \$50 off eyeglasses or Rx sunglasses.

The Messenger: Pre-roll video on local news affiliates; SEO & SEM; social media.

The Strategy: We're stepping up our digital marketing this year because more than ever people are consuming more media in non-traditional methods. Continually carving huge budgets for traditional marketing isn't appropriate. In addition to substantial digital buys on local NBC, CBS, ABC and FOX affiliates, we're doing everything we can to broaden our approach to reach people on their tablets, desktops and smartphones. We dipped our toe in traditional search engine marketing (SEM) and search engine optimization (SEO) models to make sure anyone looking for OptiCare or "eyecare" or "vision care providers" finds us in our local footprints.

This year, we're adding a more robust social media campaign, doing retargeting and pre-roll video to increase our exposure on any screen you happen to be viewing. Pre-roll video pops up before the news appears from whatever local affiliate you happen to subscribe to.

Social media—Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.—is a pretty new venture that we haven't utilized to a degree that we would like. This year, we brought in a company to manage those aspects, and we have daily Tweets and Facebook and Instagram updates of our latest lines or technologies to reach the digital user.



What We Learned: After doing a little pre-roll last year we doubled down this year because the impressions were very cost effective and the number of people who clicked through to our website was worthwhile. We chose pre-roll video rather than mid-roll or post-roll video because it creates a roadblock before you get your content and we don't pay for it if they don't view it.

We already have a somewhat captive audience who wants to see the weather or traffic report, for example. People are becoming more used to being served advertising in these methods. People will sit through a 15-second video, but we don't do much more than that because then it gets tedious. We don't do post-roll because not many general consumers hang around to hear your marketing message after they saw what they wanted to see.

We've been doing SEM and SEO for a while, and those have allowed us to appear very high in search results both organically and pay-per-click.

Geo-Targeting and Reputation Management

Rosin Eyecare posted an offer.
February 9 at 1:27pm · 🌟

Free Eye Exam with purchase of glasses or contact lenses. (\$85 Value)



FREE Eye Exam w/purchase
Expires Wednesday, March 11, 2015
44 people claimed this offer

Resend Offer

Jonathan Rosin, MD

Co-President

Rosin Eyecare

Chicago

The Message: Free eye exam with purchase.

The Messenger: Facebook, reputation management.

The Strategy: Chicago is a very expensive market. We historically relied on direct mail but recently moved to digital marketing. Facebook can be a very effective way to get in front of lots of people with relevant messaging and timely call-to-action packages. Recent changes in Facebook make it much easier to geographically target people. Previously, our Facebook ad would pop up if viewers were the right demographic, which wasn't always a good thing if they were too far away. Now, changes in Facebook allow us to target our audience based on location.

We also tremendously value our online reputation. We can do a stellar job for 100 people, but the one person whose glasses are two days late from the lab is the Yelpster who gets a lot of attention. So we engaged a company that focuses on our social media reputation. They compiled a survey that is sent to patients who were recently in our office to solicit feedback about their experience in the form of succinct answers. Respondents are electronically savvy people, and the company enables the patients to easily post their commentary on their own social media sites.

Continued on page 59

@VisionMonday

Facebook.com/VisionMonday

VISIONMONDAY.COM

MESSAGE IN A PORTAL

Cohesive Campaigns Drive All Traffic to Website



Norman Childs
Founder and President
Eyetique
Pittsburgh

The Message: Contests, Eyetique-branded giveaways, free shipping on contact lenses.

The Messenger: Retargeting, social media, cross branding.

The Strategy: All e-blasts, internet links and social media sites act as one cohesive unit linking back to the Eyetique.com website. We guide consumers to where we want them to go. We put a lot of money into retargeting ads. One of our main retargeting ads right now is for contact lenses and free shipping on any order in the U.S. Most of what we do is awareness for Eyetique. It's about brand engagement not about two-for-ones or sales. It's about engaging our followers to be interactive with us.

The ways in which we get them engaged is not necessarily about optical. For example, because it's a family-owned and operated business in its 36th year, we show family photos for Throwback Thursday. This year, we took all the old ads from 35 years and posted them every Thursday leading up to a sale.

We give away Eyetique-branded merchandise such as shirts and coffee mugs. We're tied into organizations that support the arts. When they share with their people it creates a chain reaction.

This also ties into our celebrity campaign, which we started 30 years ago in print and now tie into our digital marketing. Every two weeks we highlight a different celebrity—professional athlete, musician, businessperson, artist. We still do print but we took it to television and Facebook.

Continued on page 59

Video Evokes Emotions to Put a Face on Optometry

Alan Ulsifer, OD
Chief Executive Officer/President
FYIdoctors
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

The Message: Optometrists can change people's lives.

The Messenger: Video, social media.

The Strategy: Inspired by Simon Sinek's 'Start With Why' TED Talk, we created our own video to help the consumer understand what the company stands for and to show what differentiates companies that are more than just great. The video was created to help tell the story to the public about what optometry does and why it's important to get your eyes checked, but there is also an emotional rationale behind it. The video is intended to evoke emotion by putting a face on optometry, which can often be more of a technical profession.

The video appears on the main FYIdoctors site (www.fyidoctors.com) as well as on all of the regional sites. We did some social media around the video and plan to take it down from five minutes to 1-minute and 30-second formats for use as advertising in the digital space in the future. That will come when we collectively brand all of our locations under the FYIdoctors banner at the end of May.



What We Learned: When we first played the video at our general meeting last year there was a room full of crying optometrists. Most of the audience was in tears because it meant something to them. People want to stand for something, be a part of something special and help others. We do some great things for people, but sometimes we get caught up in the day-to-day and forget what we stand for, who we are and why we are here, so the video also reminds us internally what we do. The message reminds optometrists how what we do can change people's lives and aligns the consumer with the people who work within our company.

Other social media initiatives included a Facebook promotion for Optometry Giving Sight's World Sight Day campaign that increased FYIdoctors followers by 110 percent. Our goal is to leverage social media around messaging that means more than just advertising, something that emotionally connects to patients, the lab, reception, accounting, the home office and the entire staff.

MESSAGE IN A PORTAL

Television Ads Drive Organic and Paid Search Online

Joseph Williams

Digital Marketing Manager

Stanton Optical / MyEyeLab

Palm Springs, Fla.

The Message: Two pairs for \$69; buy-one-get-one.

The Messenger: Television, paid and organic search.

The Strategy: While television scores high for brand

recognition, we want to be sure that someone who views our commercial also searches for us on Google and that we appear not only in organic but in paid search as well. With a maximum of 20 listings on the first page of search results, we want to be able to dominate the number of listings we have on that page, so we set up Google Adwords where they charge us on a per-click basis for keywords searched.

We also set up retargeting and remarketing. If someone comes to our page but doesn't schedule an appointment, we have special banner ads that follow them online for a few days after that. While our messages heavily focus on promotional pricing, such as two for \$69 or buy-one-get-one, we also try to display some lifestyle images and some of our frames in the banner ads as well.

We're starting to dive into social media more now. In addition to being on top of current trends, we also want fun posts that will be shared. We recently launched and found great success with a "50 Frames of Gray" campaign that spotlights our signature frames in different tones of gray.



What We Learned: Based on the times we run a television ad, we see spikes in organic as well as paid traffic results.

Google Adwords works. By using our brand name or some variation of how our brand name could be spelled or misspelled affects our cost per click, which is substantially less than if we go for a generic word such as "eyeglasses." We compare this to shelf space. If a retail store has 10 spaces on a shelf, we want to see how many of those we can put our own brands on.

Social media is a relatively inexpensive if not free way to promote the business and drive more traffic to the sites. The digital component of our company is relatively new, so we are making a lot of changes to our website to start to show consumers our own signature frame lines. This way it becomes more of a user experience as consumers search for those specific brand names.

TV and Radio Broadcasts Generate a Measurable Response



Mark P. Brown
Chief Operating Officer

The Hour Glass
Tallahassee, Fla.

The Message: Buy-one-get-one, one-hour service, most vision plans accepted.

The Messenger: Local television and radio, digital marquees.

The Strategy: We spend the majority of our advertising dollars, about 90 percent, on TV. This is our 30th year, and we've been doing TV since the beginning. We also do a little bit with local sports talk radio, which is big in this town, focusing on Florida state football. The local show has a decent following, and they offered us a great program at a reasonable rate. We sponsor 'The Vision Check' for five minutes every Monday at 5:15 pm with an ad at the beginning and the end.

Two locations also incorporate digital marquees out front. I am a strong believer in out-of-sight/out-of-mind, because the more you can put in front of people's faces, the better chance they come in your doors.

What We Learned: There was a period of time we got off TV several years ago. We thought we were still doing great, but about a year without it, we could see a decline. It was kind of like a gas leak in your house. You don't know it's killing you

Continued on page 59

MESSAGE IN A PORTAL

Keywords and Banner Ads Click Through to Coupons

Darren T. Horndasch
President
Wisconsin Vision, Inc.
New Berlin, Wis.

The Message: Deals on exams and eyeglasses, 50 percent off, \$49 single vision and \$79 bifocal lenses.

The Messenger: ZIP code-specific search engine optimization.

The Strategy: We're working with a company in Milwaukee to assist us with very ZIP code-specific search engine optimization managed through Google. We're also doing banner ads based on keyword searches, and we're posting ads on Pandora. Someone who has done a search for a particular keyword, such as "eyewear" or "vision care," will then have a Wisconsin Vision banner ad show up on their screen.

To find dollars to employ in the digital scene, we evaluated which print advertising was successful and which was mediocre. Surprisingly, ValPak works well for us, but wraps around grocery ads in newspapers only had fair results. Why spend dollars for fair results? So we used those same dollars to pursue a different direction in digital. Digital is about 10 percent of our total retail advertising dollars.

Before, we were doing it in-house and not really doing search engine optimization. Our level of engagement was Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Twitter, and we continue to do that. With so many different entities and people making comments, we could employ someone all day to do social media. We want to respond, so the organization helps us do that. It's hard to keep up and be cre-

Continued on page 59

Managing Facebook With VSP's My Marketing Team

Jeffrey Harris, OD
Owner

**Beaverton Vision World/
Tigard Vision World**
Beaverton and Tigard, Ore.

The Message: The effects of blue light, AMD and UV exposure; eye healthy foods, seasonal gift ideas, and contact lens care.

The Messenger: Facebook management tools offered to Premier Program practices through My Marketing Team; 4PatientCare.

The Strategy: We had a Facebook page for a few years where we would randomly post pictures and quotes, but when we became VSP Premier providers, it was a no-brainer. They give you suggested posts with pictures that we can pre-plan in advance. In less than 30 minutes, we have a month's worth of Facebook posts scheduled.

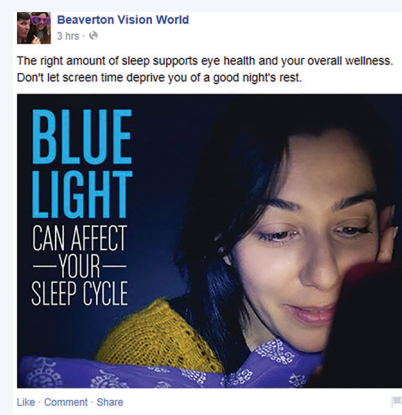
We average posts from My Marketing Team about three times per week, but we also upload our own posts. When patients pick up a complete pair of glasses, we take a picture with our iPad, post it to Facebook, and say "help them win their next pair free." One winner per quarter who gets the most likes wins their next pair free up to a \$300 value.

We've also been using 4PatientCare for about a year to digitally reach out to patients for appointment reminders, glasses-ready announcements, online scheduling and e-mail blasts.

What We Learned: Using Facebook posts from VSP's My Marketing Team is very convenient. In the past, we would have to intentionally go to Facebook, look for articles and a picture, then format and verify them. Now, they provide the link to something relevant. For example, blue light is a buzzword in our office, and there are a lot of articles that pertain to that. They also suggest posts for specific dates, such as upcoming holidays. There is also a lot of flexibility. We can change the wording or the dates. It's very easy, and you can customize it for your practice.

We just started the third quarter of our next pair free contest, which has been very effective. We average about four new likes per week. One patient in our Beaverton practice had over 1,200 views of him in his new Oakley glasses.

Most patients love being accessed by text or e-mail by 4PatientCare. It keeps our schedules full if staff members forget or don't have time to make reminder calls. It's another way to use technology to access patients and free up doctor and staff time. About a dozen patients schedule online each week, and about half of those are new patients that the staff didn't have to talk to that fill our books.



@VisionMonday

Facebook.com/VisionMonday

VISIONMONDAY.COM

Geo-Targeting and Reputation Management (cont'd)

Continued from page 52

What We Learned: We spent \$200 on a recent Facebook campaign and already have 43 people who've responded to it and claimed the offer. At the same time, we spent about \$2,000 on a direct mail campaign with the same compelling call-to-action to 5,000 households and got zero response.

Digital marketing is astounding to me. When comparing apples to apples, we spent 25 times more on all recent direct mail campaigns. Digital marketing is effective provided you know who your audience is.

For example, I question mass media for Millennials because they are connected in a way that does not involve snail mail or telemarketing, and with them you are not only hitting a very influential group of people, but they are also influencing their parents and grandparents. We strongly believe the influence Millennials have over their Baby Boomer parents is profound, and they sometimes influence the decision making their grandparents are going through in regards to surgery and treatments. Electronic media is where we are going to see some response rate from Millennials.



Cohesive Campaigns Drive All Traffic to Website (cont'd)

Continued from page 54

What We Learned: Whenever we share videos on Facebook, we also cross promote the eyewear brands that are featured in the video. We featured a very hip and trendy local restaurant, Bar Marco. They recently made national news for doing away with the tipping system and giving salaries and health benefits to their employees. We're not scared of putting ourselves out there in the community. It's important for optical companies to take advantage of what is around them.

Being in the internet age, when looking for prospective celebrities, we no longer look for just the big names. We look for those with a big web presence, someone with a lot of Twitter followers or online following.



TV, Radio Broadcasts Generate a Measurable Response (cont'd)

Continued from page 56

until you're dead. The minute we turned TV advertising back on, our numbers shot back up. The owner said he would never pull TV altogether again.

After doing radio for about a year and a half, we've measured its effectiveness. We give patients comment cards when they buy glasses from us, and in the section that indicates where they heard about us, we can see that radio has definitely motivated people.

While the digital signs in front of the two locations are about \$30,000 each, I know they get people's attention because I see it on the comment cards. Before spending on a digital marquee, I would definitely recommend doing your due diligence and find out your governing body's restrictions and codes because local ordinances can restrict what you do with outdoor signs. Restricting what you can do, that you can't use animation or that you have to change the message every eight seconds, for example, can negate a lot of a marquee's value.



Keywords and Banner Ads Click Through to Coupons (cont'd)

Continued from page 58

ative and relevant on social media. We'll continue to do Facebook and the others. The organization will monitor them and advise us, but we still have three administrators in the office.

For these social media sites, we follow the organization's advice but continue doing it in-house. For example, we just posted a photo of "American Sniper" wearing Wiley X on Twitter and Instagram.

What We Learned: We started using the organization to assist with search engine optimization in January and met in February to look at the results, so this is very new to us, and we're still determining how many keywords and how many people do click-throughs.

We noticed very positive results when we put coupons on our website. That's why search engine optimization is so relevant. If they click through and go to our ads, coupon redemption from our website is more effective than paper.

The organization is helping us monitor keywords and some of the other social media activities. We're learning to adjust what keywords to deploy.

