

OPTICAL PRISM

DIGITAL

THE FOR EYECARE PROFESSIONALS

February 2022 | Digital Edition | No. 23

EYEWEAR FOR
DIVERSE
FACE TYPES

Shades of
PINK
& RED

Valentine's Day
synonymous with
colours of love

+ INTUITIVE CARE
IN CALGARY

Dr. Danielle Gordon runs
purpose-driven clinic

Embracing **DIVERSITY**

Black-owned eyewear entrepreneurs discuss
importance of representation



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www.opticalprism.ca

PUBLISHER

Suzanne Lacorte
416-999-4757
slacorte@opticalprism.ca

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Nick Samson
416-450-6425
nsamson@opticalprism.ca

EDITOR

Denis Langlois
519-379-1380
dlangois@opticalprism.ca

ASSISTANT EDITOR

David Goldberg
416-254-7151
dgoldberg@opticalprism.ca

SALES & ADVERTISING:

Kathleen Irish
905-330-5024
kirish@opticalprism.ca

ART DIRECTOR

Suzanne Lacorte
416-999-4757
slacorte@opticalprism.ca

DIGITAL CONTENT MANAGER

Matt Standen
mstanden@opticalprism.ca

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIST

Laural Samson
lsamson@opticalprism.ca

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SAFILO

The spring/summer 2022 Jimmy Choo women's eyewear collection by Safilo introduces a new range of sunglasses and optical frames, reflecting the glamorous, sexy and alluring spirit of the Jimmy Choo woman.

Both the glamourous, oversized square-shaped AURI/G/S sunglasses and the new square-shaped JC329 optical frames are subtly enhanced with a coloured glitter fabric that is manually applied on the front upper rim and feature functional metal rivets for a refined finish.

The refined square-shaped LETI/S sunglasses, meanwhile, are subtly decorated with a coloured glitter fabric that is manually applied on the lenses. They also feature the functional metal rivets for a refined finish.

The new CAMI/S sunglasses boast a contemporary rectangular-shaped frame in acetate with bold oversized arms that are decorated with the JC logo repeat pattern. These shades are finished with a subtle JC logo in coloured metal on the temples.

And be sure to check out the stunning new CALIX visor that rounds out the collection.

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KENMARK EYEWEAR

Charlene, Joyce and Yolanda are three of the new Vera Wang Eyewear winter styles by Kenmark Eyewear.

Charlene is a petite and easy rectangular shape featuring a simple square crystal on the temple with a tooling line down the middle for additional texture. This style is available in black, rose and teal.

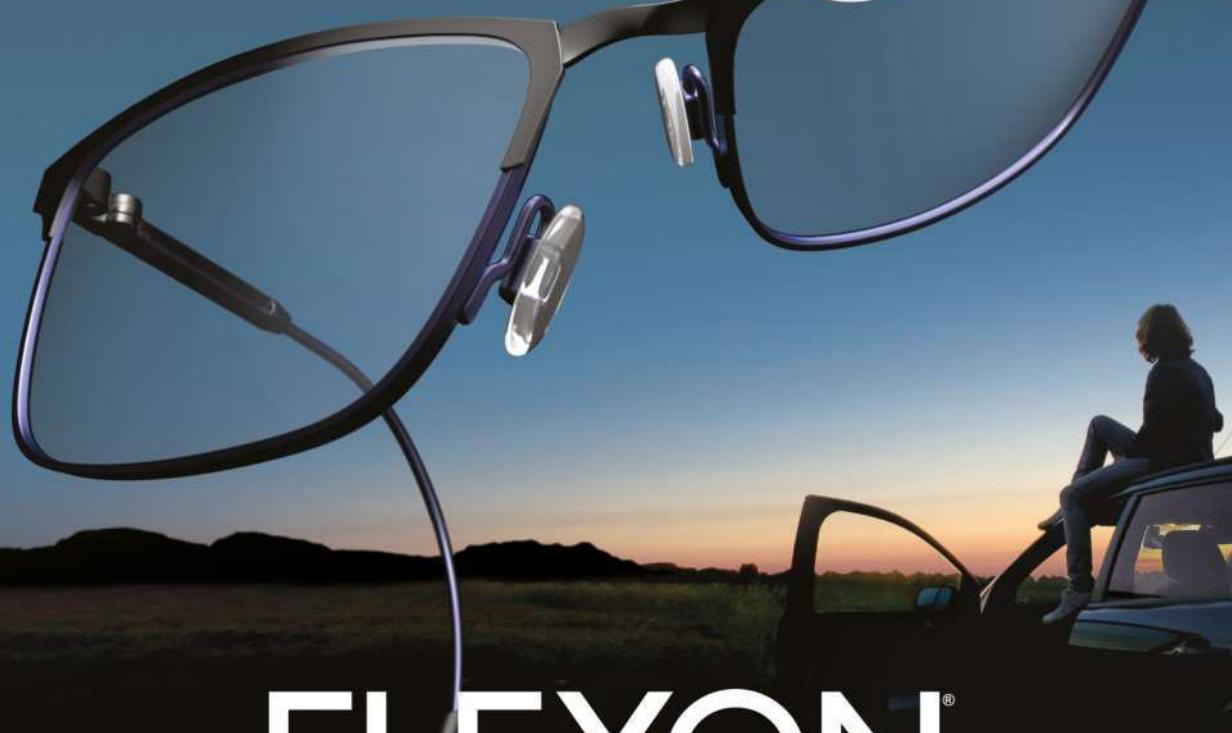
Joyce is a sweet and elegant oval shape frame featuring crystal detailing on temples. It is available in silver, jade and rose.

Finally, the Yolanda is an upswept rectangular shape with baguette crystal detailing on temples and is available in black, suede horn, jade and sapphire tortoise.

For more information, visit:
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THE READERS WOOLF

THE READERS CHURCHILL

THE READERS HEMING

ALLPOETS HUGO

ETNIA

Etnia Barcelona is consolidating this year as the Etnia Eyewear Culture Group and growing its portfolio with the launch of three new independent eyewear brands. They include Allpoets, a collection of ISCC-certified, modern organic eyewear, crafted in CRT (carbon renewed technology) acetate, produced by the Mazzucchelli-Eastman partnership. The collection offers premium-quality minimalist basics, much sought after in the street, with the DNA of a sustainable, radical activist brand.

Lool, another new collection for Etnia, features technical, ultra-lightweight eyewear and its own patented “hinge” system and completely screw-free structure. The technology employed makes the frames easy for any optician to dismantle and assemble. Moreover, the brand is currently involved in registering two patents, which are set to revolutionise the lightweight eyewear sector and sustainable production.

The Readers is a disruptive brand in the preassembled sector, with “bold” vintage-inspired frames made from injected biodegradable acetate and Visottica-Comotec components. This “reading” brand offers different models: blue light, presbyopia, and sun.

For more information, visit: etniabarcelona.com.



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† Lam CSY, Tang WC, Lee RPK, Chun RKM, To CH. A randomized clinical trial for myopia control – use of myopic defocus spectacle lens. 8th International Congress of Behavioral Optometry (ICBO), 26-29 of April 2018. Sydney, Australia.



BLACKFIN

McDowell and Yates are new beta-titanium optical frames, added to the Blackfin Aura collection for fall/winter 2021.

McDowell features a slightly squared panto shape, while Yates boasts softer, more rounded lines.

The gradient nylon rims seem to blend seamlessly with the titanium and are available in a palette of tones from shades of green and blue to silver grey and black gold for McDowell and bordeaux red, vibrant blue, brown and amber gold for Yates.

All styles in the Blackfin Aura line are hypoallergenic, 100 per cent bio-compatible, nickel-free and come with tilting nose pads in medical-grade PVC and adjustable, ergonomically designed Swordfish temple tips.

For more information, visit: blackfin.eu.

LUNOR

The Lunor M9 line now features frames in a well-balanced, two-tone look.

Antique Gold merges with warm brown, Antique Silver unites with noble midnight blue and satinized rose gold nestles against mysterious green.

M9 frames are available in panton and round shapes.

For more information, visit: lunor.com



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Alcon



Feminine, contemporary aesthetic

New Carolina Herrera collection includes complete offering of sunglasses, optical frames

BY DENIS LANGLOIS

The new CAROLINA HERRERA spring/summer 2022 eyewear collection by Safilo is created for a confident, empowered woman.

Conveying a classic yet contemporary idea of femininity, the collection features a complete offering of both sunglasses and optical frames.

There are styles in acetate and in metal as well as in perfect combinations of both.

Shapes range from squared to butterfly to cat-eye, personalized by a shiny tag with the iconic red monogram CH logo or a round 3D

insert with the monogram on the temple tips.

Styles also boast distinctive details, such as pearls embellishing precious sunglasses and optical frames, exuberant colour combinations of acetate elements and enamel touches in easy-to-wear designs.

A Pearls product story presents women's sunglasses and optical frames embellished by sophisticated pearls on the fronts as well as on the temples and end tips.

The line includes the CH 0002/S refined cat-eye sunglasses in injected resin with polished metal rims.



This style features a pearl on both sides of the front for a sophisticated feeling and a subtle half-pearl on the temple tips.

The CH 0005 refined cat-eye optical frame, also in injected resin, is decorated by pearls on both temples and a subtle half-pearl on the temple tips.

“Created for a confident, empowered woman.”

A Polka Dots product story includes optical frames and sunglasses decorated by a playful polka-dots print in different sizes and lively colours on metal wire cores on the temples.

An Essential product cluster features easy-to-wear sunglass and optical styles with subtle details, such as the iconic stripes pattern interpreted in different ways.

Both the CH 0051/S sunglasses, which boast a subtle butterfly geometric shape, and subtle cat-eye CH 0054 optical frame feature sophisticated horn or Havana-coloured acetate with exquisitely glued inserts in solid or transparent colours.

The collection also includes a Stripes product cluster, with styles decorated by stripes pattern details on the acetate fronts, on the metal rims or on the temples wire-core, for a classy and smart look conveyed by their bold yet easy-to-wear design. **OP**



CAROLINA HERRERA
EYEWEAR

emb div

THE
KINGSTON



racing versity

Black-owned eyewear entrepreneurs discuss
importance of representation

BY DENIS LANGLOIS



February is Black History Month in Canada, an opportunity to celebrate the many achievements of Black Canadians and their communities throughout history.

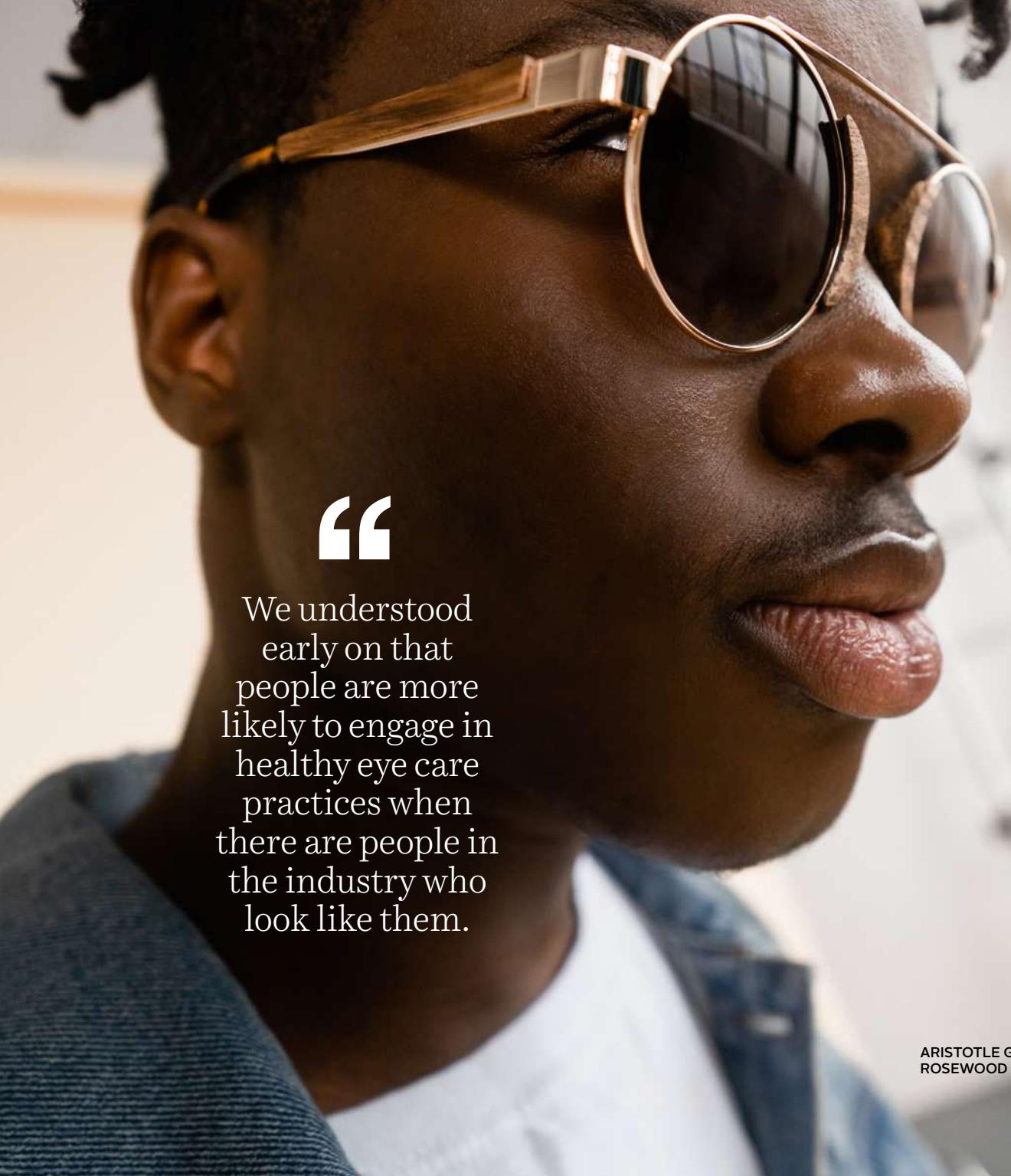
But it's also a chance to reflect on and continue working to address the challenges and barriers Black and other visible minority entrepreneurs, both in Canada and the United States, continue to face due to institutional and systemic racism.

Black entrepreneurs face barriers to acquiring financing and securing government grants to grow and sustain their businesses, according to a February 2021 “Building Black Businesses in Canada” report by the Canadian Black Chamber of Commerce.

Black entrepreneurs also reported lacking social capital and networks to set up businesses for funding successfully and, in regions with lower populations of Black residents, Black entrepreneurs identified isolation and limited networks as key barriers to growing their businesses.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has acknowledged that Black business owners face systemic barriers that have been “exacerbated” by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

In honour of Black History Month, Optical Prism is profiling some Black-owned eyewear companies, both in Canada and with products available in Canada, to learn why it's so important to have Black representation in the optical industry and about the challenges Black entrepreneurs face in setting up and growing eyewear businesses.

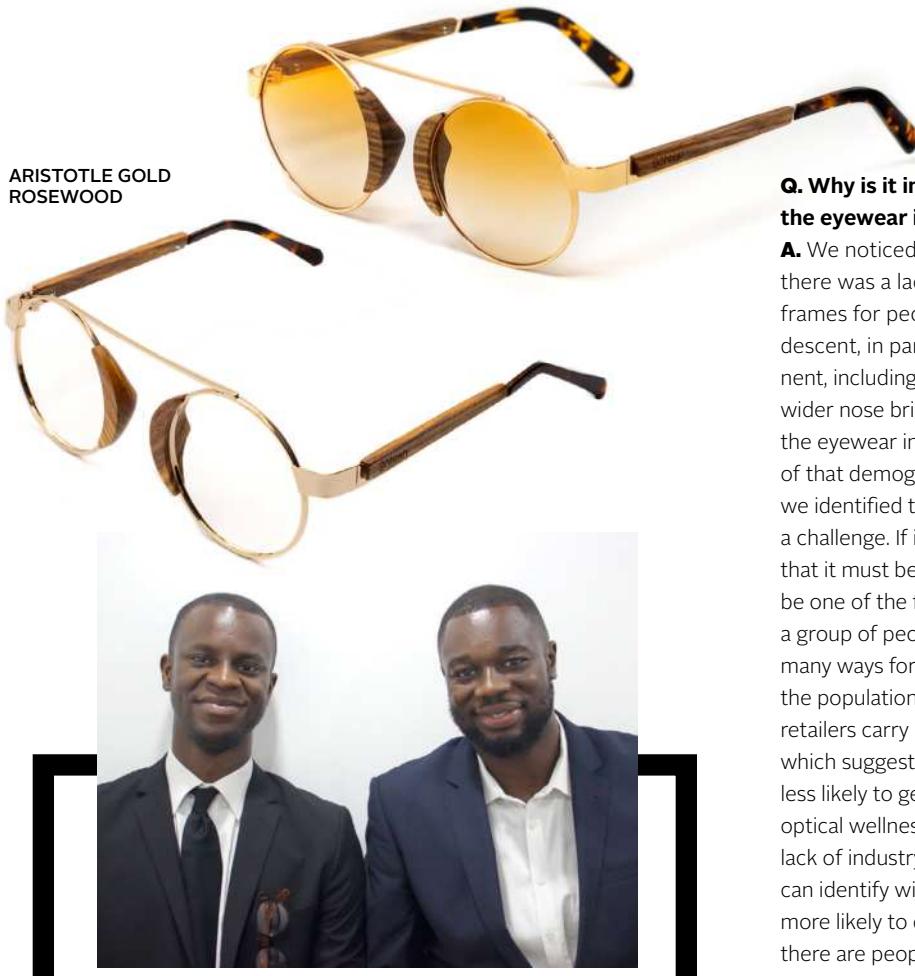


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We understood early on that people are more likely to engage in healthy eye care practices when there are people in the industry who look like them.

ARISTOTLE GOLD
ROSEWOOD

ARISTOTLE GOLD ROSEWOOD



BÔHTEN Eyewear

First up is Bohten Eyewear, a brand based in Canada, designed in Ghana and inspired by Africa.

The company launched in 2012 by co-founders and brothers Nana Boateng Osei and Nana Kwadwo Osei.

The brand fosters a culture of diversity and inclusion within the eyewear industry by ensuring Black, Indigenous and other people of colour feel a sense of belonging and self-worth. The company says it is also committed to producing quality eyewear designed to fit the faces of people of African descent.

The company first developed its Barklae frames and has seen its offerings grow to more than two dozen designs, while its staff size has nearly tripled in the past nine years.

Here is an abridged version of our conversation with the company's founders.

Q. Why is it important to have representation in the eyewear industry?

A. We noticed early on (before Bohten launched) that there was a lack of eyewear companies that designed frames for people of colour. For people of African descent, in particular, their faces tend to be more prominent, including higher cheekbones, stronger jawlines and wider nose bridges. We thought we could revolutionize the eyewear industry by honing in on meeting the needs of that demographic. As wearers of glasses ourselves, we identified that finding the right fit for our faces was a challenge. If it was a huge issue for us, we recognized that it must be for so many others. So, we decided to be one of the first in the industry that would represent a group of people that have been marginalized in so many ways for so long. In Canada alone, 3.5 per cent of the population identifies as Black, but how many optical retailers carry Black brands? There are numerous studies which suggest that members of BIPOC communities are less likely to get routine eye exams and other forms of optical wellness. We believe that this is partly due to a lack of industry experts who people of colour feel they can identify with. We understood early on that people are more likely to engage in healthy eye care practices when there are people in the industry who look like them.

Q. Have there been challenges to starting up and running a Black-owned business in the eyewear industry?

A. Starting and running a Black-owned business comes with its growing pains, but the rewards have far exceeded the challenges. In the beginning, we struggled to access optical retailers who would only focus on larger, more established brands that cater to the majority demographic. There appeared to be a lack of consideration for minorities and their representation.

With that in mind, we have been pushing to get our name in these larger retailers in bigger markets, and while we have had some success, the quest for optical stores to stock our products (and other Black-owned eyewear companies) is still a challenge we are working on.

Q. What motivates you in your business?

A. Our clients. It never gets old when we read a review from a customer who has fallen in love with our frames because it fits their face perfectly and in a way they were not able to find anywhere else.

We made it a point to not just sell eyewear. We are selling an experience. We combine our love for the African continent, culture and identity to provide a unique experience for our customers. To know we are changing people's perspectives of eyewear and what it represents has been the biggest reward for us.



VONTÉLLE

Next, we chat with Tracy Vontéllé Green and Nancey Harris, two friends who founded New York City-based Vontéllé in the summer of 2019.

Their website officially launched at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in October 2020.

The lack of ethnically inspired eyewear styles in the marketplace inspired these two women, who met at university, to create their own line.

The brand offers exotic textiles and ethnic patterns reflecting African, Caribbean and Latin cultures.

Vontéllé's inaugural line boasted 37 "Bold, Brave and Beautiful designs."

Here is an abridged version of our conversation with the co-founders.



RED KENTE

“

Once you've reached a new place, challenge yourself all over again. Success is in every accomplishment; you set a goal and you take the steps to do it.

- TRACY VONTÉLLE GREEN

Q. Why is it important to have representation in the eyewear industry?

A. The optics of the eyewear industry for diversity has been lacking for centuries. The industry has been primarily European and male-dominated. From our research, many cultures are wearing ill-fitting eyewear. Our designs include a wider bridge for the nose, a longer temple for a comfortable fit on your ears and wider lens to fit over high cheekbones.

Vontéllé's target market is from the following backgrounds: African; American Black (including Biracial); Latino & Latinx; Asian; and East Indian Asian. Moreover, these ethnicities want to see more colour and pattern in their eyewear selection.

Q. Was there a need when you started to design and create eyewear by and for Black consumers?

A. In the United States and globally, African American consumers spend billions of dollars on eyewear produced by luxury name brands, but they are not owned (designed and manufactured) by African American/Black-owned fashion houses or companies. Most importantly, after conducting interviews, many complained about indentation markings on the bridge, pain behind the ears or glasses that tilted on the face as they just did not fit.

Everyone acknowledged it, but did not have a solution. Enter Vontélle - we realized it was necessary to start to design and create eyewear by and for Black consumers.

Q. What have been the challenges of starting up and running a Black-owned business in the eyewear industry?

A. As two women of colour interacting in a very male-dominated industry, we encountered a few challenges. Initially, it was difficult to find a manufacturer as collaborations are key and essential to any business.

When we decided we wanted to start this business, we traveled to Paris for Fashion Week, which featured all the brands in the marketplace. We immediately stood out. Truth set in as we realized, there were only a handful of African Americans present. Had we not met the right manufacturer during our visit to Paris, we would not have an eyewear collection today.

We interviewed many designers and manufacturers and they either did not believe in us, could not understand our vision and/or did not want to work with two young Black women. Many did not call us back; the three that did, one was overcharging. We had to find the right collaborator who saw our vision and wanted to work with us at the right price.

Q. What motivates you in your business?

Tracy: I always lived by the adage challenge yourself. Once you've reached a new place, challenge yourself all over again. Success is in every accomplishment; you set a goal and you take the steps to do it. Most importantly, I want to leave a legacy for my son, for other African Americans, that if we are allowed to participate and given the same resources, we have equal opportunity for success.

Nancy: My personal motivations are my son, husband, and mother. My mom migrated to the United States from Jamaica to create a better life for her family. She was successful in bringing the entire family (mother, father, brothers, nieces, nephews), but she never lived out her own dream. Still, she is a staunch supporter of her family and has passed the baton to all of us to live out our aspirations.



RWANDA WAYFARERS



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SHADES OF SHADES EYEWEAR

Finally, Optical Prism spoke with Marsha Douglas-Sydnor, a brain tumor survivor and mother of three who founded in 2018 Shades of Shades Eyewear, the first luxury eyewear brand exclusively devoted to "nude natural eyewear for all skin tones."

The brand was created to provide inclusive nude eyewear to an industry that mainly focuses on limited nude colour selections.

Designed in the United States and handmade in Italy, the five Shades of Shades styles are available within a 14 shade-inclusive nude palette.

"I was inspired by the lack of inclusion within the eyewear industry. I needed to change it. There hasn't been an eyewear brand to exclusively offer nude eyewear, so after not being able to find my custom Butter Pecan nude silhouette, I created Douglas-Sydnor says.

Here is more of our conversation with the founder.

There hasn't been an eyewear brand to exclusively offer nude eyewear, so after not being able to find my custom Butter Pecan nude silhouette, I created it.

- MARSHA DOUGLAS-SYDNR

Q. Why is it important to have representation in the eyewear industry?

A. There was a complete void in the nude eyewear industry for those that did not fit into one or two shades of pink or beige. Our brand was created to fill that void. Representation and inclusion is at the forefront of our mission to be leaders in this space. It's important to not only know that you exist, but to celebrate your existence.

Q. Was there a need when you started to design and create eyewear by and for Black consumers?

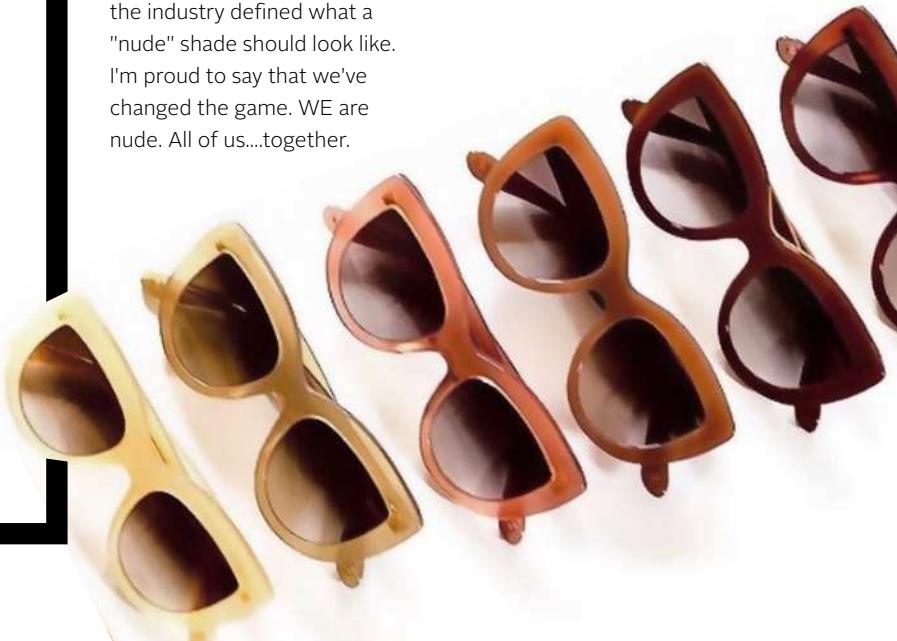
A. Absolutely, not only black consumers, but any shopper who the industry has overlooked. The term "nude" is relative and up until now, the industry defined what a "nude" shade should look like. I'm proud to say that we've changed the game. WE are nude. All of us....together.

Q. Have there been challenges to starting up and running a Black-owned business in the eyewear industry?

A. I believe that there are challenges that come along with starting up any business, including funding, quality sourcing, and marketing, however, our mission continues to outweigh the challenges, and therefore, we continue to move forward, no matter what.

Q. What motivates you in your business?

A. People. I am motivated by all the beauty that surrounds us in this world. Our differences remind us of how unique we really are and those unique traits need to be recognized, celebrated, and uplifted. **OP**



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[†]Compared to a single vision 1 day lens over a 3 year period. [‡]Fitted at 8-12 years of age at initiation of treatment.

References: 1. Chamberlain P, et al. A 3-year randomized clinical trial of MiSight® lenses for myopia control. *Optom Vis Sci.* 2019; 96(8): 556-67. 2. Chamberlain P, Arumugam B, Jones D, et al. Myopia Progression in Children wearing Dual-Focus Contact Lenses: 6-year findings. *Optom Vis Sci.* 2020; 97(E-abstract): 200038.

EYEWEAR FOR DIVERSE FACE TYPES

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

Around the world each year, opticians dispense millions upon millions of pairs of eyeglasses.

Customers go into stores or use augmented reality apps online, trying on dozens of pairs, seeking the finest frames that fit firmly and without deviation.

This task is harder for some.

For decades, eyewear was tailored to a specific face type. It was difficult for people with larger-than-average bridge and temple sizes to find fabulous frames to fawn over.

Optical Prism spoke with some eyewear industry leaders and designers to get their take on the industry's

current selection of frames and the growing demand for a more diverse portfolio of offerings for all face types.

Phernell Walker sits on The Vision Council's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Taskforce.

He says eyewear designers have come a long way in offering form, fit and fashion designs to address the needs of diverse customers.

“It’s a multi-billion-dollar consumer base that’s been underrepresented for years and it’s great to finally see eyecare beginning to recognize this huge opportunity with some exciting new technologies.”

Walker says it’s time for eyewear

companies to optimize designs by using the User Center Design (UCD) process for developing their eyewear.

He suggests partnering with consumers to determine their needs and wants. He also points out that some companies are using computer-aided design (CAD) technology in real-time to custom-design eyewear for each consumer allowing for unlimited possibilities.

“Optometric optician practices realize diverse teams bring a spectrum of perspective. Positive disruptive progress derives from a diverse group of people, coming together to create the future versus simply responding to it, leaving non-spectrum competing business models irrelevant.”





Robin Brush, training and education manager, Safilo North America, is an ABO-certified optician and has worked in optical for the last 26 years.

From her perspective, Brush says that, like the fashion industry, the eyewear industry is slowly branching out to meet the needs of more face shapes.

“We’re talking about larger eye sizes for men and women which are still trendy and fun to wear, and not plain or dated because of the larger size.”

Brush points to Safilo’s inclusion of Global and Asian fitting styles, which have been highly successful in North America, along with styles designed for the African American

patient that are starting to be seen in more brands than in the past.

“Close-set eyes and a wide head have always been a challenge along with women who require a temple length of 145mm or longer. Full, round faces with high cheekbones can also be challenging.”

She advises paying attention to the patients who wear the glasses of your competitors.

“If you truly want to meet the needs of customers, go out into the opticals and meet your customers and the opticians selling your products. Get out of the office and put boots on the ground where your products are being sold.”

So, if you have time to curate collections from several different sources, is it safe to say that all face types can be serviced in today’s world?

At Sphere Optometry in Calgary, Alta, licensed optician and manager Bethany Thompson says she encounters a lot of patients and clients who have trouble finding the right fit.

“We see it a lot, especially with smaller fits. People that need something like a 46 to 48 eye size, are usually left shopping in the kids’ section. We like to make sure we have something for everyone, and it’s always cute to see how excited people get when they are so used to only seeing one or two options and they have 10 or 12 to choose from with us.”

Thompson says she is seeing some encouraging changes coming to the industry and companies moving away from carrying the same two or three shapes.

“I think that we’re starting to see more things like universal fits and nose pads on acetate frames, those

EMBRACING HUMAN DIVERSITY

Eyewear marketed as “Asian-Fit” can also be an ideal option for people outside of the intended demographic.

Lesley Harrington, a biological anthropologist and associate professor at the University of Alberta, says the size and shape of a person’s face are the products of a complex set of factors that may not bear any relationship to a person’s ethnic identity.

“Facial features vary in complex ways. Some aspects of the size and shape of facial features may be the product of adaptation, while some features may be shaped as a by-product of other changes or through natural selection,” she says.

Harrington says the eyes and nose and ears don’t vary as a package and that improving eyewear will be about offering new combinations of features that accommodate fit, as well as style and colour.

“Human variation is complex and something to celebrate. With that being said, it’s a good thing that eyewear manufacturers are embracing human diversity through their product offerings.”

are still hard to find, at least in terms of well-made independent lines. That’s something that would be nice to see more often, more inclusive fitting that way, especially lower bridges.” **OP**

Shades of PINK & RED

Valentine's Day synonymous
with colours of love

BY DENIS LANGLOIS





1



2



3



4



5



6

1. kate spade new york Ivie.
2. kate spade new york Velma/S by Safilo.
3. Etnia Barcelona BRUTA8
4. Morgenthaler Frederics X Dee & Ricky.
5. Modz Fairbanks by Modern Optical.
6. Komono Adrian.



Intuitive care in Calgary

Dr. Danielle Gordon runs purpose-driven clinic

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

It's almost time for dinner and Dr. Danielle Gordon is chatting with me virtually from her home in Calgary.

We're talking optometry and fashion frames when her two kids bust down the door. They ask her about food and when she'll be done with her interview.

When you're seven years old, waiting for your mom always feels like an eternity.

She calmly asks them to leave the room, adding that she'll be done very soon. The kids push back a bit, but politely comply with their mom's request.

The door softly closes in the background and she turns back to her laptop.

"Sorry about that," she says. "Now, where were we?"

Dr. Gordon is one of Canada's great young eye care professionals.

The accomplished optometrist, wife and mother, runs Sphere Optometry in Calgary's Mahogany neighbourhood in the city's southeast corner.

She talks about Calgary with such enthusiasm, you'd like to think she was a local, born and raised in Cow Town.

"There's a really fun undercurrent here with a lot of small business owners trying to do things differently. And people are very locally supportive here and they really want to know who their business owners are and that's only increased since the pandemic."

Although her love for Calgary is genuine, Gordon's story began 3,000 kilometres away at the University of Waterloo in Ontario.

While pursuing an undergraduate degree in science, she discovered



“Ocular wellness, whole-body wellness and also giving back to the community is huge. It’s been part of our fabric from the beginning. **”**

optometry. She was drawn to the blend of biology and physics that led her to UW’s renowned optometry program.

“Once we started patient care at school, I found it was a really great fit for my personality and a good fit in terms of being a lifelong learner,” she says.

Optometry school is where Gordon also found love. After graduation, she and her husband decided to head out west to start their careers. It was a temporary plan that became a little more permanent than they expected.

“Our five-year plan turned into a life plan I guess,” she says.

PURPOSE-DRIVEN OPTOMETRY

Fast-forward to May 2019 and Gordon opens the doors to Sphere Optometry.

She describes it as a full-scope, purpose-driven optometry clinic and optical shop.

“Ocular wellness, whole-body wellness and also giving back to the community is huge. It’s been part of our fabric from the beginning.”

Gordon’s team members are constantly reinventing themselves, with the goal of providing compassionate and intuitive care.

“The eye care experience can be a little nerve-wracking for people when the news isn’t always good. You’re reminded about something about yourself that doesn’t work the same as other people or your prescription might be getting higher. When you do this job day in and day out, you can forget how anxiety inducing a trip to the eye doctor can be for some.”

That’s why Sphere Optometry has made some special design considerations.



“We’ve done everything we can to make this a relaxing environment, from the music we play and the fragrance in our space to the quotes we have on our walls...it helps us make those little connections with people.”

FIT TO READ

Gordon’s team has also made a concerted effort to connect with the greater Calgary community with an

important initiative, The Fit To Read Project.

"We collect books all year round at Sphere and donate them to Calgary Reads, a local organization whose mission is to create a community full of joyful readers."

So far, Gordon's clinic has collected more than 3,200 books for donation. A self-proclaimed bookworm and the daughter of a librarian, she is extremely passionate about making sure these kids don't miss out on future opportunities.

"Most of us have a book that's impacted our life and changed our trajectory even just a little bit. And to know that there are kids out there that just simply don't have access is really heartbreakingly."

CHANGING LIVES

One of Gordon's favourite parts of being an optometrist is having

dedicated time to connect with her patients.

"Let's imagine the most routine exam: A healthy young person with no eye concerns and no

ing on in her brain. I ended up referring her to ophthalmology and then she went on to neurology and it turned out she had a tumour and had to have emergency surgery."

"We collect books all year round at Sphere and donate them to Calgary Reads."

prescription. You still have that chance to make a really meaningful connection and set their day on the right path and I feel like that's still the best part of my job. Those nice little moments with people during the day and the feelings are mutual. It fills my cup too."

Of course, there are also times when a routine eye exam can save a person's life.

"A woman came to see me with a visual field loss and it had a characteristic pattern where it made me concerned about what was go-

The woman's surgery was successful and she returned to Gordon's clinic a few months later to thank her in person.

"I don't diagnose brain tumours every day, but there are those who will say 'you made me more comfortable with the thought of wearing glasses' or they'll say 'you explained about my child needing glasses so well and I felt more comfortable with it.' All of those little thank-yous stand out. I remember a lot of those." **OP**



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THE SPECSAVERS ADVANTAGE

World's largest optometrist-led business announces location setup free for new owners

A Specsavers, the world's largest optometrist-owned and -led business, announced its investment in independent optometrists and opticians by covering 100 per cent of location setup costs as 200 new Specsavers open across the country, committing \$100M CAD.

The unprecedented decision has been made to boost business ownership by optometrists and opticians to help them achieve success while remaining autonomous, competitive, and able to provide consumers with better patient care and greater variety of affordable, high-quality eyewear.

“There is no other way to achieve the best patient care than to ensure the independence and autonomy of optometrists and opticians,” said Bill Moir, General Manager, Specsavers Canada. “At a time when we’re seeing more and more consolidation in the Canadian market with independent optometrists and opticians being encouraged to sell their practices to a handful of larger players, we intend to reverse that trend and offer an alternative that enables them to own a thriving business, have access to cutting-edge technology and put their patients first.”



Dr. Scholfield, Optometry Partner, and Seija Gilks, Retail Partner, (centered) owners of Specsavers Woodgrove on December 11, 2021 in Nanaimo, BC.

Specsavers is seeking passionate optometrists and opticians who share the company's purpose of providing accessible, quality eyecare to all. By covering all establishment costs, which averages \$500,000, Specsavers will enable business owners to start their business debt-free, while supporting their career progression with a variety of development initiatives as they grow their business.

As part of the partnership, optometry partners retain all the billings generated by their optometry clinic, and retail partners receive a competitive salary from the optical store. Both optometry and retail

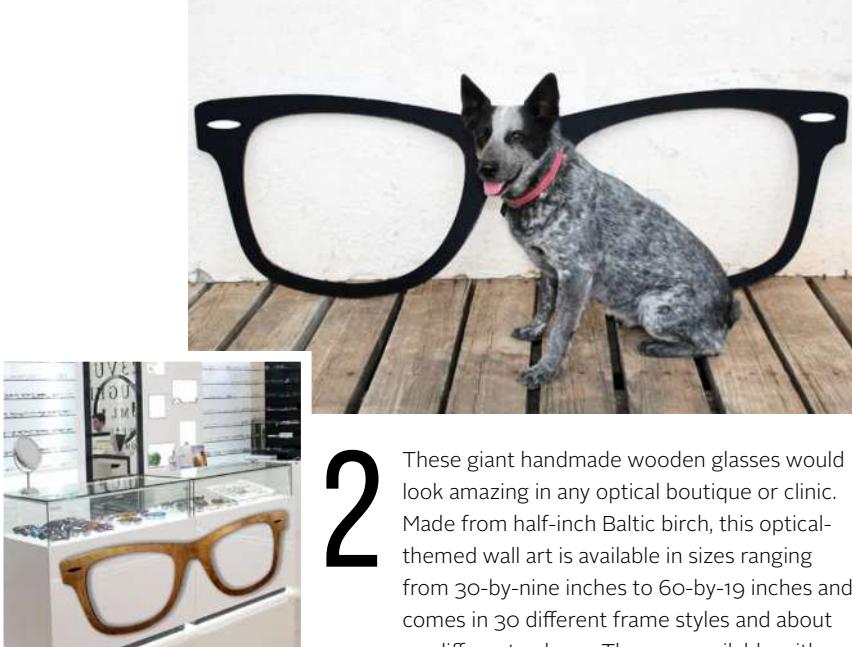
partners will also receive an equal share of the profits generated by the optical store. Opportunities are currently available in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario, with more to follow as Specsavers continues to expand in Canada. **OP**

Optometrists and opticians who want to learn more about this opportunity at Specsavers should attend the info sessions hosted in February by registering at specsavers-spectrum.ca/info-session

EYE *level*

Here are some important, innovative or unique products, available to Canadian eye care professionals, that we're loving this month.

1 **SAFILO** is debuting new Imprint 3D Technology through its proprietary brand, Smith. The initial launch is a first-to-market, custom-crafted 3D-printed snow goggle, which delivers increased all-day comfort, eliminates light leak due to improper fit, removes pressure points or hot spots, and features an expanded field of view. Using Smith's custom app, users scan their face to capture their unique details and contours, allowing an individualized frame to be automatically generated, 3D printed and hand-assembled into the best-selling Smith I/O MAG goggle. Smithoptics.com



2 These giant handmade wooden glasses would look amazing in any optical boutique or clinic. Made from half-inch Baltic birch, this optical-themed wall art is available in sizes ranging from 30-by-nine inches to 60-by-19 inches and comes in 30 different frame styles and about 30 different colours. They are available with no lenses, grey acrylic lenses or acrylic mirror lenses. etsy.com/ca/shop/TheGlitteredPig

3 **ALCON** is expanding its suite of advanced technology intraocular lenses. Clareon Toric is now available for surgeons to correct cataracts and astigmatism during surgery, with exceptional rotational stability and remarkable clarity. Alcon has also expanded parameters for AcrySof IQ Vivity, which provides an extended range of vision and allows more patients to see clearly with reduced dependency on glasses following cataract surgery. Alcon.ca



4 Toronto-based photographer and writer Robert Ahola, who works in the optical industry in Peel Region, has published an ebook, Eye Candy - fashion eyewear for men and women. The book features a colourful and in-depth look into fashion eyewear for men and women. books.apple.com/ca/book/eye-candy/id1511745723



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BUSINESS BUILDING

Identify opportunities and implement action plans that ensure financial stability in this competitive environment.

TRAINING

Custom workshops to build high performance teams and businesses. Including sales strategies to increase eyewear sales, niche products and treatments.

VISUAL MERCHANTISING

Organize and reset Ophthalmic office and retail space to improve product appeal and create sales.

CUSTOMER MAPPING

Understanding and improving the customer experience throughout the Eyecare journey, creating long term patients.

SPEAKER

Experienced storyteller and influencer with powerful messaging.

CHANGE LEADERSHIP IN THE OPTICAL INDUSTRY

Guide ownership to be proactive and lead change strategically rather than reacting to change.



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- 2008 Eye care Director of the Year Pearle Vision, North America
- 2007 Field Performance Consultant of the Year, North America



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VISUAL MERCHANDISING: THE MESSAGES YOU SEND

BY NANCY DEWALD,
Lead Up Training and Consulting

Humans respond best to visual stimuli – consumers' decisions are subconsciously influenced by a store's aesthetic and how that makes us feel.

Knowing this helps us understand why visual merchandising is critical to our success.

WHAT IS VISUAL MERCHANDISING?

The art of presentation, which puts merchandise in focus to enhance its sales appeal.

There is a misconception that visual merchandising is decorating when, in fact, it is about sales and productivity.

WHAT ARE THE PAYOFFS OF GOOD VISUAL MERCHANDISING?

1. Enhances the consumer shopping experience

Raise your hand if daily you hear consumers say, "I hate shopping for glasses." If you do not sell the eyewear, ask your team. Consumers outright tell us we need to improve this experience. You can lower your hand now.

Organizing and presenting in a manner that feels less overwhelming is a big part of improving the experience. Product that is organized, displayed simply and clutter-free with proper signage is pleasing for the human eye and brain.

Make it easier for consumers to shop by keeping brands together. If a consumer likes a particular brand, they want to know what is available in that brand without searching.

Separate metals and plastics within the brand. Organize light to dark, top to bottom and on a shelf left to right.

When the consumer can quickly narrow down what they like because the product is well organized, they are more inclined to buy.

2. Increases Sales

When displaying product, how it's displayed will influence how much someone would pay. For example, something mass merchandised on tables or stacked indicates there is lots of supply, therefore, is inexpensive. This type of display would be used for contact lens solutions, accessories or sale frames. Items nicely displayed with few items would indicate they are more exclusive and, therefore, more expensive. Product priced in between the high and low should be evenly spaced on shelves and bars.

Consider the flow of your office. Watch where consumers gravitate to. This is your key retail space. Leverage this space for bestsellers and new lines, promotions, or lines you are determining to go forward with or not.

3. Improves inventory management

Organized product helps you know immediately what is selling and where to invest.

Most importantly, when everything has a place, it deters internal and external theft. The saying less is more is true.

I recall helping one practice and the owner informed me he had more than 1,500 frames and people still walked because they could not find what they liked. The problem was they had too much selection and consumers were too overwhelmed to even try to find what they liked. Limit the number of brands you carry and have proper depth in those brands.

IS YOUR OFFICE BRANDED AS A FASHION LEADER YET DISPLAYS EYE DISEASE PICTURES EVERYWHERE?

4. Allows a practice to stand out in a competitive marketplace

Display brand images. In optometry, we carry amazing brands. We need to highlight them more. These companies spend millions of dollars on advertising – take full advantage of that. Brand recognition will keep a consumer in your dispensary as they will gravitate to a brand they know; it makes them feel comfortable.

I often get asked about décor – is it ok to add in seasonal items or nice decor? This is fine if the focus remains on the product. Décor may be used to enhance the display, but never to distract from the product you are selling. Be sure

displays are simple, clean, and current. Consumers do not want to see fall leaves in January.

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID:

The visual appearance of your office sends a message beyond the organization of the product for sale. Take a moment to look around to ensure you aren't making common mistakes:

Signage

Be sure it aligns with your brand; the message is clear and current.

Some examples. During COVID, did the sign on your door say, "the door is locked" or did it say, "welcome, for your safety notify us you are here and we will meet you at the door."

Is the signage in the office tattered and taped up versus placed in a picture frame?

Is your office branded as a fashion leader yet displays eye disease pictures everywhere?

Windows and Lighting

Front windows are a silent salesperson. What are they selling? If they have window clings are they in good repair?

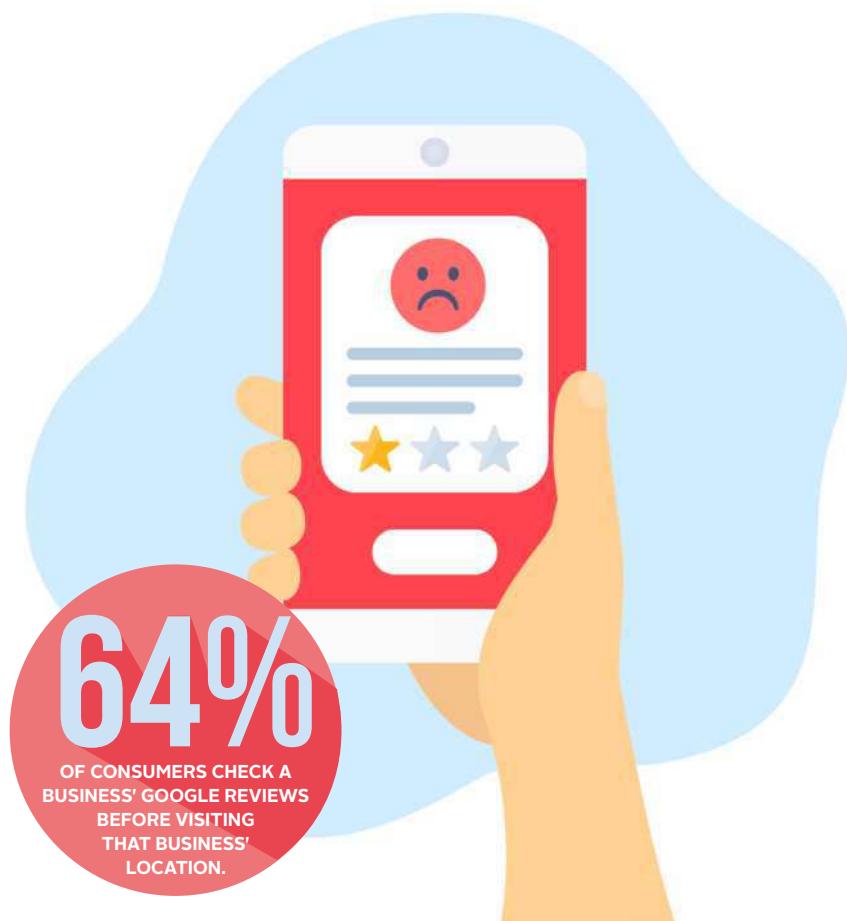
Lighting should be shining on the product. I often see it set on floors and ceilings, unless that is what you are selling it's time to get out the ladder.

When merchandising, business owners have the option of simply putting their products on shelves and hoping customers will make purchases. Or savvy business owners can learn the key factors that prompt shoppers to buy.

We can do better in our industry and I am happy to help. **OP**

Lead UP Training and Consulting
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64%

OF CONSUMERS CHECK A BUSINESS' GOOGLE REVIEWS BEFORE VISITING THAT BUSINESS' LOCATION.

Getting rid of a bad review

BY KAIA PANKHURST, Marketing4ECPs

These days, every business relies on the power of reviews, and the eye care industry is no exception.

According to ReviewTrackers, 64 per cent of consumers check a business' Google reviews before visiting that business' location – and those numbers are up 50 per cent from pre-pandemic years.

Reviews have become an integral part of user behaviour, which means now more than ever, positive reviews are crucial to the success of your business.

Unfortunately, people often use reviews to air their frustration or personal grievances with a business.

Obviously, the ideal situation would be to avoid getting any negative reviews whatsoever. But what can you do if a negative review does crop up?

Here are three solutions you could use to get rid of a bad review.

OPTION 1: Flag the review as inappropriate

Google does have some rules about what users can and can't say in a review and they allow businesses to flag inappropriate reviews for removal.

Reviews that fall under any of the following categories are eligible for removal:

- Fake reviews or spam reviews;
- Multiple reviews written by one person;
- Offensive, explicit, or harassing content;
- Reviews from former or current staff;
- Reviews written by a competing business;
- Opinions or rants irrelevant to the service;
- Inappropriate images.

You can flag inappropriate reviews by clicking the three little dots in the top right-hand corner of the review. Google will take some time to review the content, then will take whatever action they consider necessary.

This isn't a catch-all strategy.

Google will not remove reviews that don't explicitly violate their guidelines. It's also important to note that Google won't take a side when a business and a consumer disagree on the facts of a situation. All this to say option one will only work for you if you're reporting reviews that are genuinely inappropriate.

OPTION 2: Pay a reputation management service

A quick Google search will bring up dozens, if not hundreds of reputation management services that, for a fee, will work to get your negative reviews removed. Many of these services offer removal guarantees. Sure, it sounds great. But with a

closer look, you may find these services aren't all you might hope.

Each service works a little bit differently, but generally, these companies will sift through your reviews on various platforms and take note of anything that is fake, slanderous, or in some way illegal. If the platform has a built-in way to remove reviews, they will go through those channels.

Otherwise, they'll likely send letters threatening legal action if the content is not taken down.

Bear in mind, this doesn't work for every type of negative review. If it is a legitimate negative review, they will most likely not be able to have that content taken down.

OPTION 3: Try to redeem the relationship

Option 3 is a little bit more labour intensive for the business owner,

but is absolutely worth the results: personally reply to the review.

No, you shouldn't defend yourself, argue, or fire back at the poster. Instead, offer a genuine-yet-vague apology and ask to take the conversation offline.

Here's a templated message you could use:

"We're so sorry you had a negative experience with us. This does not reflect our values and we would like to make it right. Would you please send us an email at [your email address] and tell us a little bit more about your experience? Thank you so much for reaching out."

The reviewer may not want to make it right and might be satisfied just leaving a nasty review. But it does give you the opportunity to salvage the consumer's experience. More importantly, it shows other users

that you take their feedback seriously.

Bad reviews can be an opportunity

Negative reviews are, to some extent, inevitable. What matters most is how you respond to them. It's never a good idea to lash out at the consumer.

But if you take the time to evaluate the feedback and look for a way forward with the reviewer, your online reputation will most likely bounce back. **OP**

As Marketing4ECPs' manager of content strategy, Kaia Pankhurst creates and implements content strategies for eye care practices all over North America. Outside of the office, Kaia is a musician, activist, and avid crafter. You can reach Kaia at marketing4ecps.com



JOIN US ON FEBRUARY 12 FOR A GLOBAL MYOPIA MANAGEMENT VIRTUAL EVENT

The World Council of Optometry and CooperVision invite you to attend "Putting it into Practice", a global myopia management virtual event February 12. The event features experts from around the world sharing their experience on how eye care professionals can incorporate into their practices the World Council of Optometry's recommended standard of care for myopia management focused on measurement, management, and mitigation.

WHAT

WCO and CooperVision "Putting it into Practice" global myopia management virtual event

WHEN

Saturday, February 12, 2022

WHO

International myopia management experts who have adopted the WCO standard of care

REGISTER



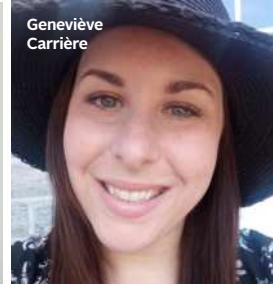
STUDENTS OF VISION SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Transitions Optical and the Opticians Association of Canada have announced the winners of the 2021 Students of Vision Scholarship program.

Rian Lam, a student optician at Ontario's Seneca College, has won the grand prize of \$2,500, while Geneviève Carrière, a student optician at Quebec's Cégep régional de Lanaudière à l'Assomption, will receive \$1,500 and Lorena Gutierrez, a student optician at B.C.'s Stenberg College, will be awarded a scholarship of \$500.



Rian Lam



Geneviève Carrière



Lorena Gutierrez

Entrants were tasked with describing how they plan to address and resolve patients' heightened concerns regarding increased exposure to harmful UVA, UVB, and blue light in their upcoming role as an optical professional.

Submissions were reviewed by a panel of judges and evaluated based on their demonstration of creativity, strategic thinking and ethics.

Through a creative video, Rian offered three simple yet effective ways to reduce eye strain and exposure to harmful UVA, UVB, and blue light such as taking 20 second screen breaks for every 20 minutes spent looking at a screen.

Geneviève wrote an insightful essay that highlighted the need for protective lenses to prevent long-term damage due to overexposure to light in both older and younger patients.

Lorena, through a fun and engaging video, emphasized the need for protective lenses to combat the increased screen time many people are experiencing due to the pandemic. "The winners of this year's Students of Vision scholarship understood these concerns and provided insightful and personalized solutions for their patients' needs." **OP**

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FYIDOCTORS ACQUIRES BONLOOK

FYidoctors has acquired Montreal-based BonLook, a brand famous for its trendy styles and technology-driven approach to eyewear.

The addition of BonLook boosts the FYidoctors portfolio with new opportunities to expand the brand nationally and beyond.

"We are delighted to welcome the BonLook team to FYidoctors," says Dr. Alan Ulsifer, chair and CEO of FYidoctors.

"BonLook strengthens our overall portfolio with a brand that stands apart with a modern consumer offering. We're here to support BonLook's growth and to continue offering unparalleled service to existing and new customers while creating business conditions for even more innovation to offer more quality products and superior services."

BonLook is a leading eyewear retailer founded in 2011 by Sophie Boulanger and Louis-Félix Boulanger. A pioneer in the online sale of branded prescription eyewear in Canada, the company now boasts 36 stores across five Canadian provinces. BonLook has developed a unique technology-driven approach in the field of optics.

Known for its stylish frames, quality lenses and accessible prices, BonLook frequently collaborates with inspiring Canadian personalities. Its latest campaigns showcase Canada's diversity, and its chic, on-trend and sophisticated brand image has won over Canadian consumers for over a decade.

"We are thrilled to be joining the FYidoctors organization," says BonLook co-founder and CEO Sophie Boulanger. "We saw an immediate upside for our brand and company when we analyzed synergies between our organizations. BonLook's entry into the FYidoctors family will provide the company and its employees with new strategic opportunities in this high growth market. Becoming a part of the FYI team ushers in a new chapter for us and it brings exciting growth, access to resources, and the opportunity to learn from their award-winning culture."

BonLook's leadership team, helmed by CEO Sophie Boulanger and COO Louis-Félix Boulanger will continue in their current roles, with the added benefit of FYidoctors' team at-large offering support as required. **OP**



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FEBRUARY

MARCH

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JUNE

JULY

AUGUST

OPTOMETRY MARKETING CALENDAR			
PRODUCT TITLE	ADDITIONAL INFO & PURPOSE OF TACTIC	METRICS REPORTING ON	INVESTMENT
Website	Website Monitoring, Hosting, Planning, Updates, Metrics	Website traffic, lead generation, responsiveness, user vs. bounce rate, unique visitors	Low
Marketing & Member Pages	Marketing posts for your website, media coverage such as Facebook and Instagram, give promoted posts to place on your website	Low	Medium
Social Library	Give promoted posts to place on your website	Low	Medium
Video Library	Promoted posts on the website as 3rd competitors, a suggested theme and call along with metrics on a monthly basis	Low	Medium
Social Media Strategy	Proposed theme and call along with metrics on a monthly basis	Low	Medium
Organic Performance Monitoring	Metrics	Low	Medium
Training Portal	Online video lessons, webinars and more	Medium	Medium
Job Board	Job board	Low	Medium
Digital Lead Generation	From lead generation	Low	Medium

Watch the recorded webinar and download the marketing calendar, playbook and social posts at marketing4ecps.com/2022-marketing-plan.

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