

OPTICAL PRISM

JANUARY 2024 • VOL. 42 • NO. 1



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XR series™

The first
eye-responsive
progressive lens.*



*Eye-responsive defined as the consideration of two parameters in the design of the progressive lens: prescription and visual behavior.

NEW

Varilux® XR series™



The first
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INTRODUCING:

Eyewear Astrology

This month's
eyewear horoscope

NEW YEAR, NEW LOOKS!

Showcasing the latest styles for 2024, with fresh and
fabulous designs to start the year off with a bang

Making a Difference

Giving back through
eye care nonprofits

FUTURE FOCUS

How AI and
virtual reality are
transforming
eye care

MAGNIFICENT MEETINGS

Up your
meeting game

VISIONARY STYLE

Crafting a
personal brand

PEACHY KEEN

Pantone's
Colour of the
Year



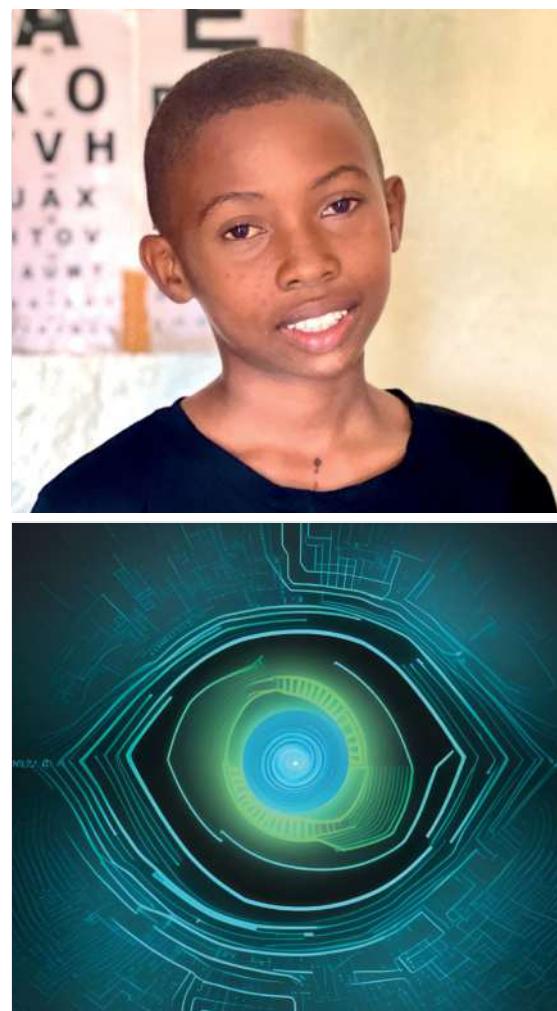
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R
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White Christmas collection.

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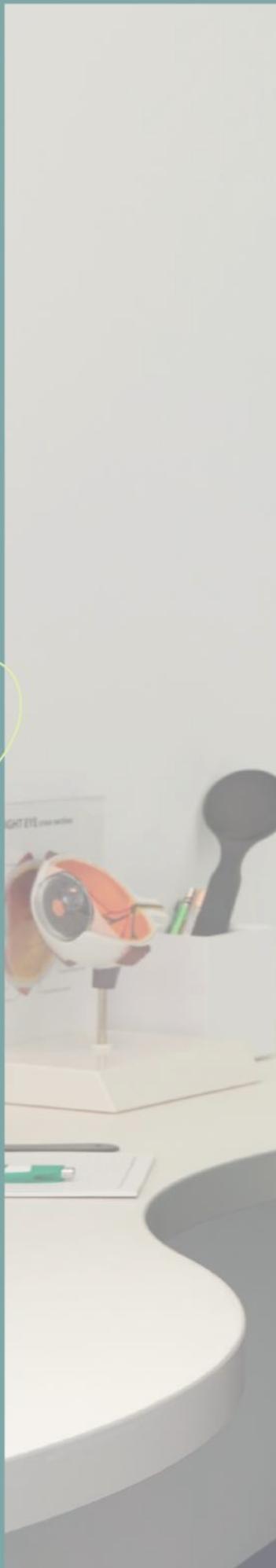
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Dr Ellen Sun, OD
Optometry Partner

Specsavers

Welcome to 2024! With a new year comes a renewed commitment to success, and this issue of *Optical Prism* is designed to help you start the year off with a bang. For many, the dawn of a new year also brings a resolution to give back, and our feature article by assistant editor David Goldberg looks at five Canadian eye care-related nonprofits that are doing amazing work both at home and abroad to bring eye care to those who need it but perhaps can't afford it. I urge you to support these charities in whatever way you can, whether through financial support, fundraising or volunteering. As our Eye Opener columnist Nancy Dewald pointed out in a previous issue of OP, partnering with nonprofits can have wide-ranging benefits not only for individuals and communities, but also for you, your team, and ultimately, your business.

Speaking of business, our Eye Opener and Marketing Insights columns in this issue offer some solid tips on how to be more successful in 2024. In Eye Opener, Nancy Dewald explains how upping your meeting game can help you and your team stay on track and work together towards a common goal. And in Marketing Insights, writer Keri Sculland from Marketing4ECPs outlines digital marketing tactics you can implement today to reap the benefits of a strong online presence for your practice.

Our Outlook and Optician Vision columns both look to the future of technology in eye care. In Outlook, CAO President Martin Spiro examines how AI can "benefit patients and practitioners by expanding access to eye care, facilitating collaboration and enhancing diagnostic capabilities." And in Optician Vision, OAC President Claudia Rojas looks at augmented and virtual reality in eye care, observing that "the optical industry finds itself on the brink of a transformative journey fuelled by AR and VR."

Partnering with nonprofits can have wide-ranging benefits not only for individuals and communities, but also for you, your team, and ultimately your business.

In the spirit of all things new, we bring you two new columns in this issue. In our new Spec Style column, eyewear image expert Wendy Buchanan explores how to craft a personal brand for business success. And we also introduce Eyewear Astrology, a new regular department featuring eyewear that reflects the personality of each month's zodiac sign.

In other eyewear news, our Fresh Looks section showcases gorgeous new frame styles to bring in the new year, and our Style Eyes feature spotlights eyewear that ties into Pantone's 2024 Colour of the Year – Peach Fuzz.

There's lots more exciting content in the following pages. We hope you enjoy it, and come away feeling invigorated for a fun and successful year ahead! **OP**



Colourful Cases from Shilling Optical



Stellest.[®]

Essilor[®]
#1 in spectacle lenses
worldwide*



Essilor[®] Stellest[®] lenses
slow down myopia progression by 67%
on average**,
compared to single vision lenses, when
worn 12 hours a day.



* Essilor #1 in spectacle lenses worldwide - Essilor 2021 edition. Essilor International company, worldwide retail value sales at RRP. **Compared to single vision lenses, when worn by children at least 12 hours per day every day. Bao, J., Huang, Y., Li, X., Yang, A., Zhou, F., Wu, J., Wang, C., Li, Y., Lin, B., Wang, D., Guo, B., Chen, H., 2022. Spectacle Lenses With Aspherical Lenses for Myopia Control vs Single-Vision Spectacle Lenses: A Randomized Clinical Trial. *JAMA Ophthalmology*, 140(5), 472-478. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2022.0401>

Fresh LOOKS

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a woman with short, dark hair. She is wearing large, round, blue-rimmed glasses and a bright yellow, off-the-shoulder top. She is leaning her head against a large, textured blue surface, possibly a wall or a piece of furniture. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and shadows. The background is out of focus, showing some architectural elements like a white railing and a blue structure.

Keep your eyewear options fresh with the latest
models from these leading companies

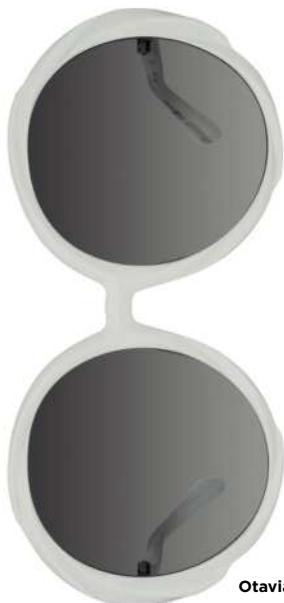


Claudia

SEA2SEE

The brand's newest "seastainable" ophthalmic and sunglasses collection is produced entirely in Italy with upcycled marine plastic. Each frame sale also finances the collection of 1 kg of marine plastic collected from the sea.

For more information, contact your Sea2See sales representative or visit: sea2see.org



LINDA FARROW

The White Christmas collection features three new limited-edition styles re-introduced in a winter white colourway. This capsule collection includes the Elodie, a flat top D-Frame; the Otavia, an oversized round style; and the Marcelo, a white gold aviator outlined with white painted detailing.

For more information, contact your Linda Farrow sales representative or visit: lindafarrow.com



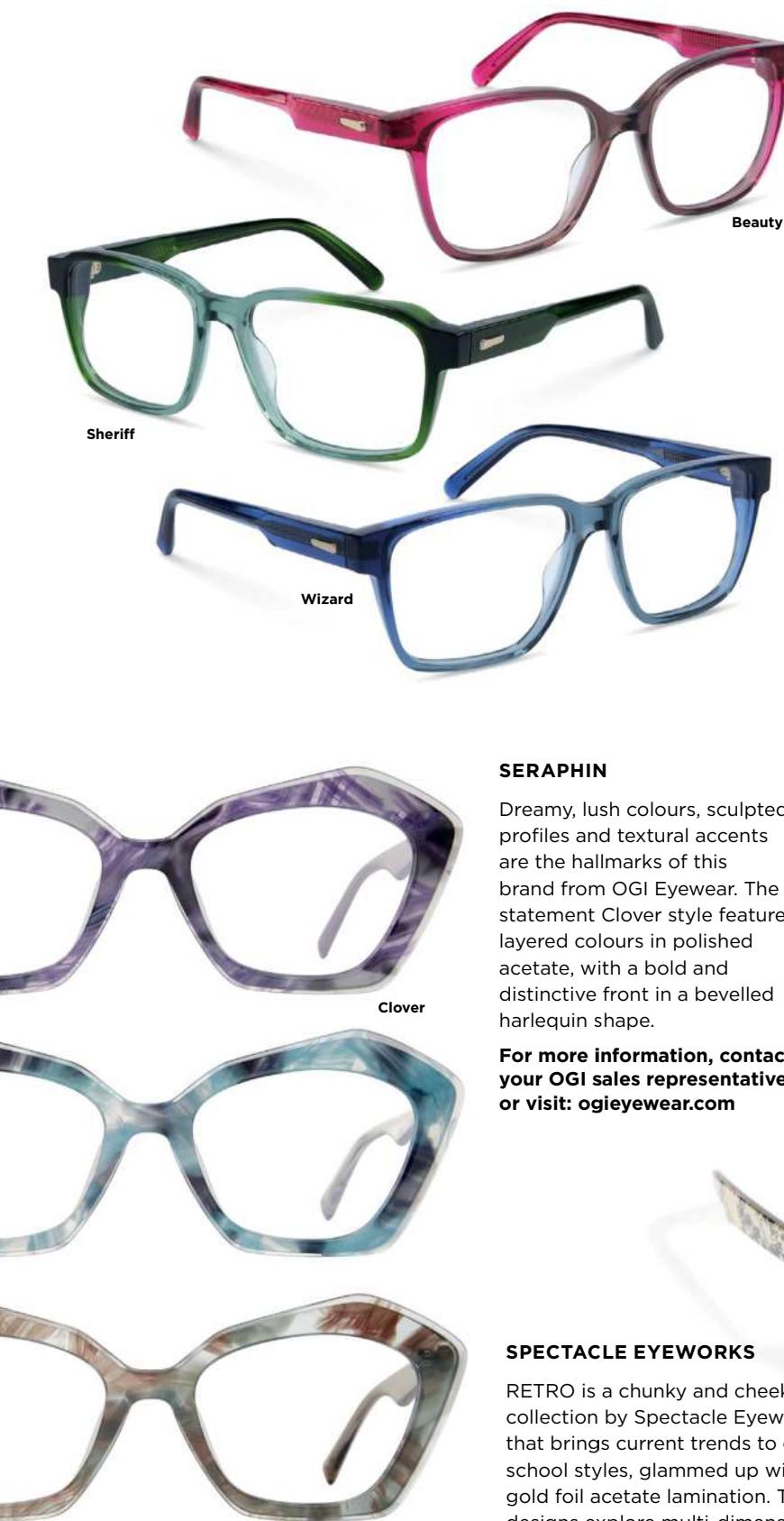
J.F. REY

The Anna metal and acetate sunglasses for women combine '70s glamour and contemporary design. The front construction is a creative patchwork of acetates and colourful geometric forms that fit together to create a graphic effect. Sophisticated textures, vibrant colours and chromatic combinations are softened by subtle transparencies.

For more information, contact your J.F. REY sales representative or visit: jfrey.fr



FRESH LOOKS



SERAPHIN

Dreamy, lush colours, sculpted profiles and textural accents are the hallmarks of this brand from OGI Eyewear. The statement Clover style features layered colours in polished acetate, with a bold and distinctive front in a bevelled harlequin shape.

For more information, contact your OGI sales representative or visit: ogieyewear.com

ORGREEN OPTICS

This Danish brand has unveiled its new Halo Nordic Lights collection, in bold colours that merge along the edges for a subtle “halo effect.” Sharp facet cutting and robust acetate thickness enhance the depth of each hue for a high-end look.

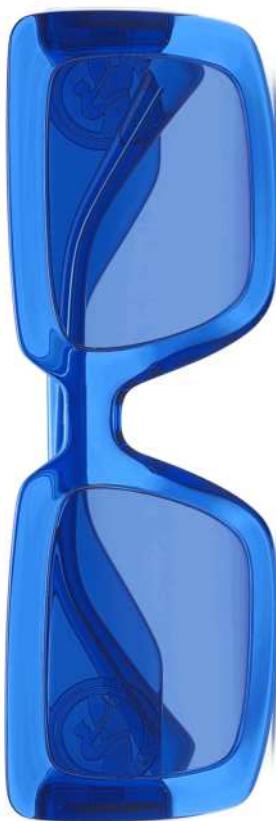
For more information, contact your Orgreen sales representative or visit: orgreenoptics.com

LONGCHAMP

Crafted in lightweight, environmentally responsible plant-based resin, this women's sunglass style boasts a bold rectangular front. The iconic Longchamp horse medallion appears on the temples in the same colour as the construction. Available in Pink, Blue, Black, Orange and Khaki.

For more information, contact your Marchon sales representative or visit: marchon.com

LO743S



SPECTACLE EYEWORKS

RETRO is a chunky and cheeky collection by Spectacle Eyeworks that brings current trends to old-school styles, glammed up with gold foil acetate lamination. These designs explore multi-dimensional shapes and bevelling to enhance and bring attention to the face structure. All styles are available in



Nada

seven colour options including Vermillion, Leaf Lamination and Fabric Lamination, as well as a semi-transparent Smoke and Sea Green.

For more information, contact your Spectacle Eyeworks or visit: spec-eyeworks.com



FERRAGAMO

FIRENZE

FRESH LOOKS

MOVITRA

Giovanni is part of Movitra's COMBO collection, constructed in multiple materials including acetate, titanium and stainless steel. This model has a slightly softened square eye shape and features Movitra's



patented closing mechanism that allows the frame to rotate and fold away, protecting the lenses.

Colourways and finishes include Black Havana acetate with galvanic finishing in Gun Metal and Light Gun; a Flash Electric Gradient Light Blue sun lens or Havana acetate with galvanic finishing in Gun Metal; and Light Gun with Green lenses.

For more information, contact your Movitra sales representative or visit: movitra.it



The Equinox



The Florida

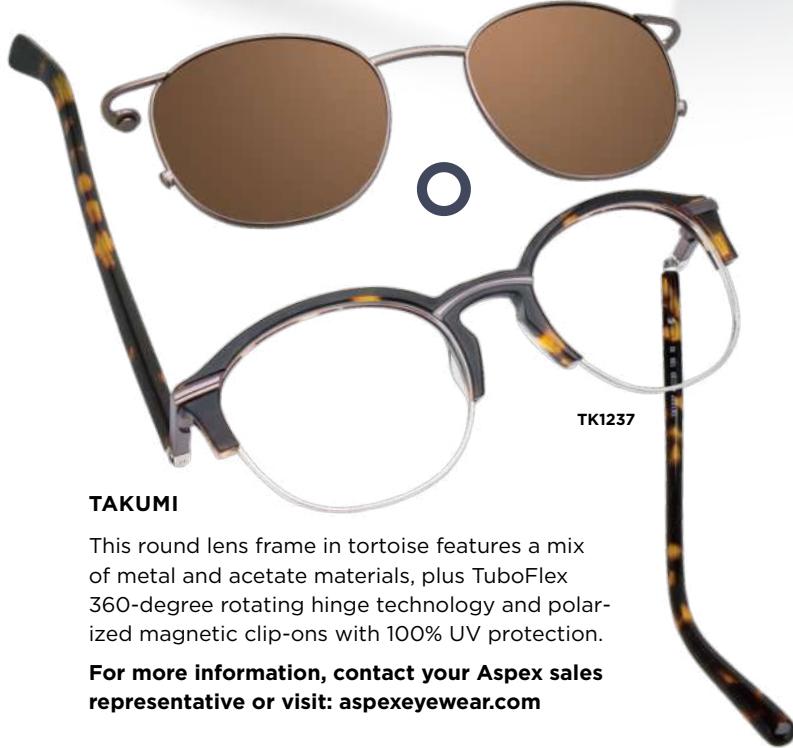
STRUKTUR

The almost round lenses of The Equinox from Struktur Eyewear add a contemporary touch to the vintage aesthetic. The Florida's unique rectangular shape is enhanced by a clever bas-relief on the upper perimeter, along with cut-out sides and a "matte velour" finish.

For more information, contact your Struktur sales representative or visit: struktur-eyewear.fr/en



Giovanni



TAKUMI

This round lens frame in tortoise features a mix of metal and acetate materials, plus TuboFlex 360-degree rotating hinge technology and polarized magnetic clip-ons with 100% UV protection.

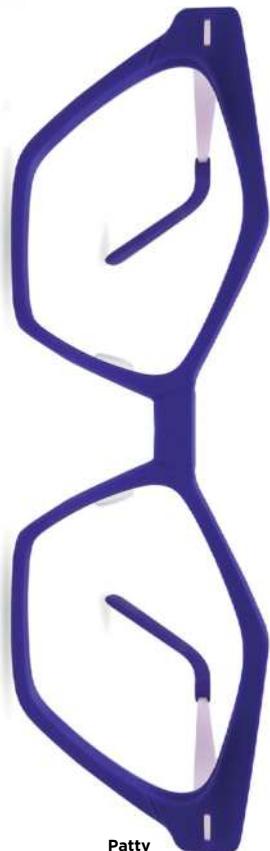
For more information, contact your Aspex sales representative or visit: aspexeyewear.com

SPECTAFUL

This Italian eyewear brand has released its CLOUD collection, including the feminine model Patty. The cat eye shape is characterized by distinctive angular edges that create a geometric look.

Originally intended as a full-size style, the Patty was ultimately designed for customers with smaller faces. Available in a palette of vivid colours, including Cobalt Blue and Deep Purple.

For more information, contact your Spectaful sales representative or visit: spectaful.com



Patty

Silhouette

Born on Earth. Worn in Space.

Titan Minimal Art. The Choice on Space Missions for 25 Years.

Making an IMPACT

Illuminating a path to better eyesight through charitable support

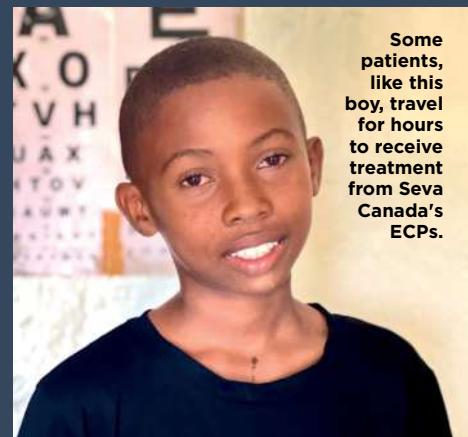
BY DAVID GOLDBERG

Anew year brings new resolutions to give back. If you're an eye care professional who is looking to make a difference in your community or do meaningful work abroad in 2024, you can't do better than supporting or volunteering with one of the many Canadian nonprofits that are on a mission to restore and protect the vision of people across the country and around the world.

From the remote villages of Madagascar to the streets of Winnipeg, Manitoba, these Canadian vision-related organizations are changing lives. They represent some of the best humanitarian efforts in eye care – each with a unique mission, but united by a common goal to bring hope to those struggling with vision loss.

There has never been a better opportunity for ECPs to make a difference in their communities and on an international scale. Let us know what you're doing to give back, and we may feature you in a future issue of *Optical Prism*. Email the editor at janet.lees@opticalprism.ca.





Some patients, like this boy, travel for hours to receive treatment from Seva Canada's ECPs.

CREDIT: Courtesy of Seva Canada

Seva Canada

Seva Canada is a charity dedicated to restoring sight and preventing blindness around the world, and with the staggering statistic that four out of five people who are blind don't have to be, this mission is both urgent and impactful.

Operating in 13 countries, Seva has made a monumental difference since 1982, helping more than five million people regain their sight.

Seva's approach includes setting up community eye centres in remote areas, like the recently founded centre in Ambilobe, Madagascar. These centres provide critical year-round care, from simple treatments to referrals for surgery.

"Seva Canada donors help hundreds of thousands of children each year," says Executive Director Liz Brant, recounting one impactful interaction she'll never forget.

"We met a boy, Ali, who had travelled with his grandmother by bus for four hours. At the centre, he was diagnosed with pink eye, which if left untreated could potentially lead to permanent vision problems. Without the centre, Ali would have likely suffered from the infection for a long time and passed it on to his family and peers."

Brant encourages Canadian eye care professionals to contribute through donations and awareness, underscoring that every donation, no matter how modest, can make a substantial difference.

Even small contributions can have a profound impact, with just \$15 preventing blindness through medication, \$25 providing glasses and \$50 funding cataract surgery.

VISIT SEVA.CA TO LEARN MORE.



Eye care professionals attending EFC's "Thanks for my Sight Night" fundraising dinner.

Eye Foundation of Canada

The Eye Foundation of Canada (EFC) is dedicated to enhancing education, research and patient care in ophthalmology. Steve Arshinoff co-founded EFC 35 years ago with fellow ECPs William Samis and Robert Gough, when they recognized a gap in the quality of ophthalmology education in Canada.

"We weren't getting the best applicants from ophthalmology because they weren't teaching it in medical school," says Arshinoff, a professor of optom-

etry at the University of Toronto who serves as the EFC's president.

The Eye Foundation of Canada offers a significant scholarship program aimed at fostering the next generation of ophthalmologists. Every summer, the foundation awards a scholarship valued at \$8,000 to one or more medical students who have completed their second year, enabling them to further their education in ophthalmic medicine, surgery and research.

"By training these people to go out into the world, we've probably had a reach of over a million Canadians who have

had better eye care because of us," says Arshinoff.

The program includes educational and research experiences in diagnosing and managing eye diseases through placements at medical facilities around the Greater Toronto Area. Each student engages in at least one research project supported by the EFC, providing them with hands-on, practical experience in the field.

Since its inception in 1991, the program has turned out 50 EFC Summer Scholars, two-thirds of whom have pursued careers in ophthalmology. This success rate underscores the program's effectiveness in inspiring and shaping future ophthalmology professionals.

And the EFC's mission extends beyond academic excellence. As Arshinoff explains, "We want to make eye care better for all of the patients who couldn't [otherwise] get it."

He emphasizes the need for involvement beyond financial contributions, with many former students now acting as mentors – a crucial element in nurturing the next generation of eye care professionals.

VISIT EYEFOUNDATIONCANADA.CA TO LEARN MORE.

Opticians Association of Canada

The Opticians Association of Canada (OAC) has a rich history of philanthropic efforts in supporting opticians and enhancing community vision care. The OAC's purpose is to bolster opticians in their careers – which not only helps opticians, but also the communities they serve.

The OAC's notable projects include the Opening Eyes program with the Special Olympics in Nova Scotia, providing vision care to special needs athletes. There's also a partnership with the Winnipeg Heritage School District that

offers glasses to at-risk students. And, on behalf of its members, the OAC is sponsoring a dog through the CNIB, which is a \$50,000 commitment.

In 2022, the OAC started supplying members who have five years of uninterrupted membership with a state-of-the-art toolkit for plying their trade in the community. That gift also includes professional liability insurance.

"We're getting feedback from opticians where they take these toolkits, and they go see their mom in long-term care, and they end up making adjustments for all of her friends in the centre," says OAC Executive Director Robert Dalton.

"We've given opticians the literal tools to act, to go into the community, and

to give back to the community."

Additionally, the OAC has teamed up with Transitions Optical to sponsor the Students of Vision Scholarship Program. This scholarship initiative focuses on encouraging advocacy for diversity, equity and inclusion within the eye care sector. Successful candidates have the opportunity to win scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,000.

"Some people get very creative," says Dalton about the various scholarship admissions he's reviewed in the past. "It's a very fun part of my job, and inspirational to see the next person that's coming along."

VISIT OPTICIANS.CA OR TRANSITIONS.COM/CANADA TO LEARN MORE.



**Vicki Singh,
CEO of Canadian
Eyesight Global.**

Canadian Eyesight Global

For more than three decades, Canadian Eyesight Global (CEG) has been on a mission to make the world a healthier place by providing free eye checkups and surgeries to those who need them most, helping tens of thousands of patients across Canada and internationally.

For Vicki Singh, CEG founding member and now CEO, the passion behind her involvement is very personal – her father, Anup Singh Jubbal, founded the charity almost 35 years ago. Having witnessed the organization's growth from the beginning, Singh started steering CEG following her father's passing in August 2021.

"He told me that a complete stranger will have their eyesight restored because of what CEG does," Singh recalls of her father's vision for the organization. "This will make

a long-lasting difference that will improve the quality of their life, their families life and their community.

"We come with nothing and leave with nothing, but it's the impact we make in someone's life that makes all the difference."

Under Singh's leadership, Canadian Eyesight Global continues its impactful work today. Last year, CEG successfully organized four camps – including two in India – that provided almost a thousand people with free eye exams, eyeglasses, medication and cataract surgeries.

Singh also encourages Canadian eye care professionals to volunteer their time at the community level.

"We are always looking for doctors to help volunteer a few hours of their time locally to camps that we're doing in Canada."

VISIT CANADIANEYESIGHT.ORG TO LEARN MORE.



Since opening its first clinic in Jamaica, CVC has provided millions of dollars worth of free eye care to people around the world.

CREDIT: Courtesy of Canadian Vision Care

Canadian Vision Care

Since Canadian Vision Care (CVC) opened its first eye clinic in Montego Bay, Jamaica 40 years ago, volunteers have educated hundreds of Jamaican eye care professionals and provided \$60 million worth of eye care to Jamaicans.

With global operations also including Costa Rica, Philippines, Africa and Guyana, CVC is always looking for generous and passionate volunteers dedicated to the mission of providing eye care to all.

"These projects uncover so much untreated glaucoma, it's really sad," Gerry Leinweber told *Optical Prism*, speaking from Jamaica where he's currently visiting a CVC clinic.

Leinweber co-founded CVC in 1981 with fellow University of Waterloo alumni Gord Hensel, Andy Patterson and Brad Almond. Since its inception, CVC and the Jamaican Lions Club have provided high-quality, cost-effective eye care in Jamaica to those who would not be able to afford it, including eye exams, glasses, surgery and medications. Dedicated ECPs are trying to close the gap in ophthalmic care in Jamaica, where only 50 ECPs care for a population of three million.

The case is the same for so many countries around the world, says Leinweber. "Without this project, many school children would just struggle to learn with large refractive errors."

"This is a chance to give back and create a memorable experience that will stay with you forever. Life is just a series of adventures, and this is a great opportunity to have one."

VISIT CANADIANVISIONCARE.COM TO LEARN MORE OR TO VOLUNTEER.

PEACHY KEEN

Pantone's Colour of the Year for 2024 is described as "a velvety gentle peach tone whose all-embracing spirit enriches mind, body and soul." In eyewear, this warm and cosy shade speaks of softness, wellbeing and modernity.

BY SUZANNE LACORTE



1.



2.



3.



5.



4.



7.



6.

Style
TIP

Pair this juicy, elegant eyewear with deep merlot fashions. Peach tones will glow against your romantic colours, creating a harmonious fusion with an irresistible edge.

- WENDY BUCHANAN
Eyewear Image Expert

1. Buttercup by Andy Wolf 2. Aurora by AYA Optical 3. Asteria 04 by Le Parc 4. KLiiK K-762 by WestGroupe 5. CL50136 by Celine 6. Honey 1370 by Orgreen 7. Lois by Modo



Colour of
the Year
2024

PANTONE®
Peach Fuzz
13-1023

CAPRICORN



DEC 22 – JAN 19

Astrological signs say a lot about someone's personality – which in turn is reflected in their sense of style. Here's the "eyewear horoscope" for this month's zodiac sign.

Capricorns tend to prefer classic and timeless fashion styles. They often opt for structured and tailored outfits that exude professionalism and sophistication.

Capricorns tend to stick to neutral colours such as black, gray and brown, as they appreciate simplicity and elegance. They might also incorporate earthy tones such as deep greens and navy blues into their wardrobe.

Overall, their fashion choices reflect their practical and traditional nature, and they are unlikely to follow fleeting trends. Think simple silhouettes, fuss-free basics and high-quality leather goods.

Famous Capricorns include Diane Keaton, Michelle Obama, Kate Middleton, Orlando Bloom and designer Carolina Herrera – all known for their classic and elegant sense of style. **OP**



RB0707V by Ray Ban



Salvador by Etnia Barcelona



Grober by Moscot



Khan by Le Parc



GIGI STUDIOS



PHOTO CREDIT: Majjan Photography

Visionary Branding

Crafting a personal brand for optometry success

BY WENDY BUCHANAN, Eyewear Image Expert

In the ever-evolving world of optometry, where precision meets panache, the importance of personal branding cannot be overstated. Your personal image – the way you walk, talk, dress and project yourself – is not just a reflection of who you are; it is a step towards your personal brand. In the ever-evolving world of optometry, where precision meets panache, the importance of personal branding cannot be overstated.

Your personal image – the way you walk, talk, dress and project yourself – is not just a reflection of who you are; it is a step towards your personal brand. In the realm of eye care, where attention to detail reigns supreme, crafting a personal brand for your team through personal style is the secret weapon for long-term success.

“

My glasses are a part of my brand!

Anywhere I go, whether it's work related or personal, people are coming up to me to let me know how much they love them. This makes networking super easy!

– Gazzy Amin, Business Consultant

THE POWER OF PERSONAL IMAGE

Imagine your practice as a tapestry woven with the threads of individual personalities, styles and expertise. The way your team members present themselves is a visual manifestation of your brand.

Clients often form perceptions based on these visual cues – the confidence in a walk, the eloquence of speech, the choice of attire, and notably, the eyewear that graces the face. Each of these elements contributes to an impression that goes beyond a mere optical prescription; it creates a human connection that clients remember and want to return to.

UNVEILING THE LAYERS OF PERSONAL BRAND

Your personal brand is not just about fashion; it's a holistic representation of your strengths, passion, values and skill set. It's the fusion of expertise and style, creating a narrative that combines medical, technical and fashion in your optical business.

The clothing and eyewear you choose becomes a canvas, reflecting your individuality in the optical realm. A well-curated personal image communicates trustworthiness, reliability, and a commitment to excellence.

THE CORNERSTONES OF BRANDING

Building a personal brand is not a fleeting endeavour; it's a long-term game that requires consistency, dedication, and most of all, authenticity.

Showing up authentically in your style of clothing and eyewear – which I like to call your Spec Style, is a powerful tool in the arena of sales and relationship experiences in the optometry business. Here's why:

1 Relatability & Connection

When clients see that you and your team members genuinely embrace your individuality, it humanizes the client relationship. People naturally connect with you. By showcasing your unique fashion sense confidently, you break down barriers and project a relatable, approachable image. Clients are more likely to engage and feel at ease when they perceive authenticity in your personal presentation.

2 Building Trust

Authenticity breeds trust. Clients often seek reassurance that they are in capable, trustworthy hands – especially when it comes to matters as personal as the frames they put on their

face. They will have more confidence in your recommendations and expertise when they feel a genuine connection with the people selecting their eyewear. This trust decreases the need for snapping selfies and requesting second opinions.

3 Attention to Detail

In the optical business, where attention to detail is crucial, your personal brand becomes a tangible display of your commitment to excellence. Clients appreciate eye care professionals who pay attention to the finer points, and your carefully put-together image is your visual power, showcasing your competence and quality of service.

4 Differentiation in a Competitive Market

In a market saturated with optometry practices and online eyeglass choices, standing out is crucial. Authentic personal style becomes a differentiator. It helps your business carve a unique identity that goes beyond the clinical aspects of eye care. People remember experiences, and when they encounter a team with a distinctive look and confident stylists who look the part, it sets your optical business apart in their minds.

“Crafting a personal brand for your team through personal style is the secret weapon for long-term success.

A STRATEGIC INVESTMENT FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS

In the vast landscape of eye care, where optometry practices abound, personal branding becomes a strategic investment in your team, and ultimately, in the success of your optical gallery.

Think of your sales team as your calling card – a visual representation of the values, quality of service and exceptional experiences you stand for.

By empowering your team members to embrace their Spec Style, you will consistently attract your ideal clients. A consistent personal brand builds familiarity, and that builds trust.

Taking the time and being intentional with a well-crafted personal brand ensures that you don't look like anyone else, essentially defusing your competition. No one can be YOU!

In conclusion, the integration of personal branding into the fabric of your business is not just a trend; it's a timeless strategy for success when consistently implemented.

As your team members become the visual ambassadors of your brand, you're not just styling eyewear – you are building a reputation of trust, distinction and long-term success in the dynamic world of eye care. **OP**

Wendy Buchanan is a renowned styling expert and the visionary and founder of the Be Spectacular sales training program. An award-winning optician and business entrepreneur, Wendy partners with optometrists to transform practices into destinations with her innovative approach to styling eyewear and the powerful combination of personal branding and team empowerment. bespectacular.com/optical



Victor Cristobal of Somerset Eye Care shows off his style expertise through his visual image.

Specsavers Expands Into Manitoba

Just days from celebrating 100 locations in Canada, Specsavers announces its expansion plans

Specsavers arrived in Canada in late 2021 with a mission of making eyecare accessible for all. Now, with nearly 100 Specsavers stores open, it is one of the fastest-growing retail rollouts and the fastest-growing network of eye care professionals in Canada. The privately owned optical retailer shows no signs of stopping, announcing its plan to expand into Manitoba in the summer of 2024.

The expansion, which follows successful launches in Ontario, Alberta and B.C., will create opportunities for Manitoban eye care professionals to own and run their own business.

Specsavers cited its strong business performance, consumer demand, and interest from optometrists and opticians seeking ownership opportunities outside of its existing Canadian markets for its decision to begin opening stores in Manitoba.

“We are pleased to see that Specsavers is being embraced by Canadians,” said Bill Moir, Managing Director of Specsavers Canada. “Our expansion into Manitoba means more Canadians will have access to comprehensive eye care and quality, affordable eyewear, as well as more opportunities for independent optometrists and opticians to start their own business. We are proud to have more than 200 optometrists and 250 fully licensed opticians in our network since launching in November 2021. The average location is caring for over 100 Canadians each week.”

65 Specsavers gives optometrists the tools they need to be successful in delivering patient care and to excel as a business owner.

While the immediate focus of the expansion is Manitoba, the company has received interest from optometrists and opticians from across Canada, and openings in other Canadian provinces may be considered in the future, Moir added.

Each Specsavers store is locally co-owned by an Optometry Partner, who is a qualified optometrist, and a Retail Partner, who is an optician or an experienced retail professional.



Dr. Jestyn Liew, OD, and Rita Charchyan, RO, opened one of the first Specsavers locations in Ontario and now business ownership opportunities are available for optometrists and opticians in Manitoba.

Specsavers provides comprehensive business support from experts in areas like administration, marketing, accounting, payroll and supply chain. The company's award-winning marketing reaches millions of consumers to drive new patient bookings, customer traffic, patient recall and outside prescriptions.

With multi-million-dollar marketing campaigns driving brand and eye health awareness, Specsavers has become popular with consumers, with locations averaging more than \$1.5 million in revenue during their first 12 months in operation.

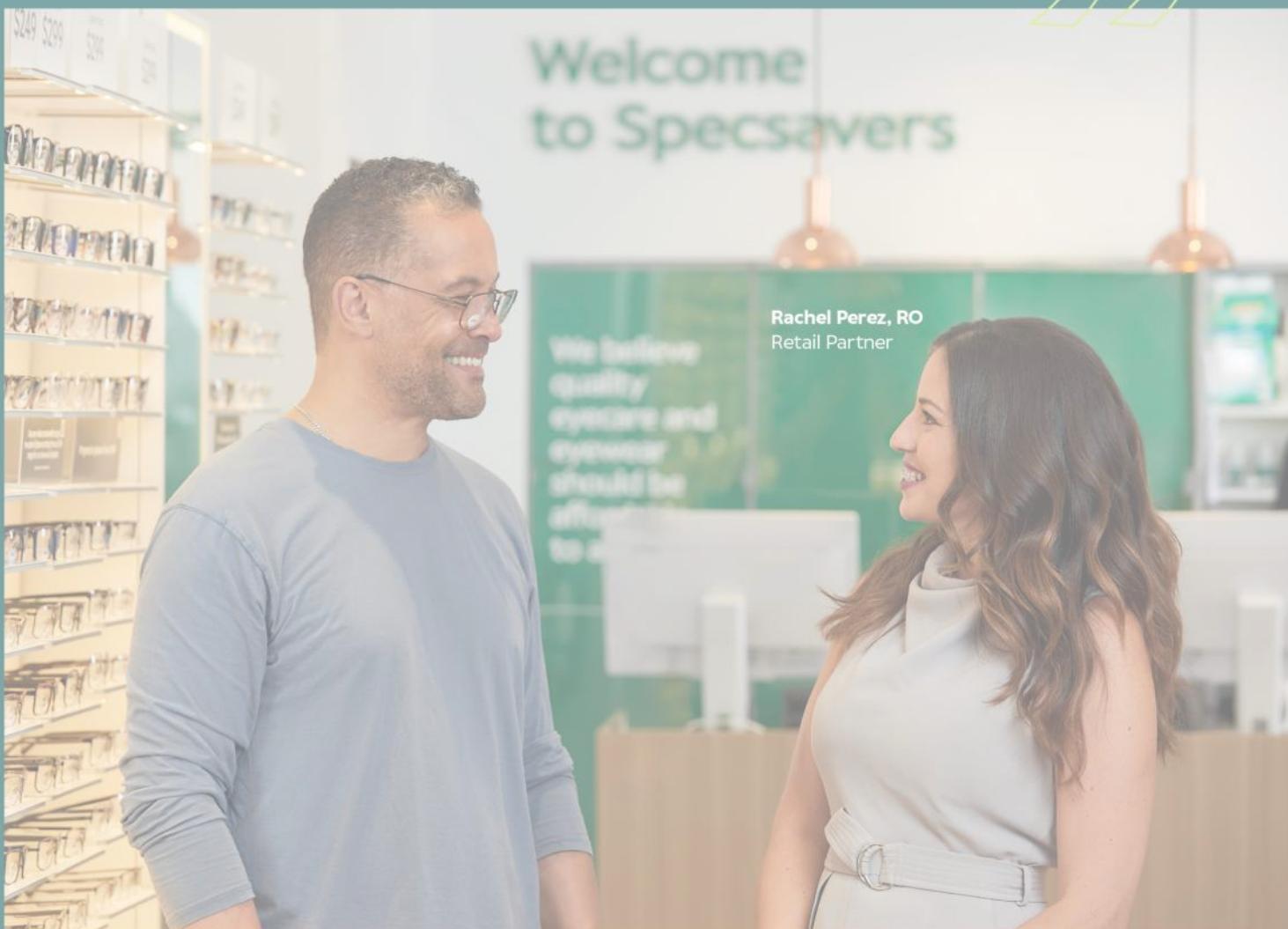
Independent clinics located within Specsavers are wholly owned and operated by the local Optometry Partner, who receives comprehensive clinical support, allowing them to focus on patient care.

“Through an optometrist-led steering group coupled with independently owned clinics with new, advanced clinical equipment, including optical coherence tomography, Specsavers gives optometrists the tools they need to be successful in delivering patient care and to excel as a business owner,” said Naomi Barber, Clinical Services Director, Specsavers Canada.

Since launching, Specsavers has covered 100% of location start-up costs for optometrists and opticians to start their own Specsavers store in communities across Canada. This investment, which averages \$500,000 per location, aims to boost business ownership by independent optometrists and opticians, and to help them achieve success while remaining autonomous and patient-care focused. **OP**

Optometrists and opticians in Canada who are interested in partnership opportunities with Specsavers can register for an upcoming online information session or learn more about Specsavers at join.specsavers.com/ca.

66 They recognize the importance of treating their teams and customers the right way. 99



Our stores are working collectively to change lives through better sight. Join the fastest growing network of opticians in Canada and play a part in improving eyecare outcomes.



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Join a great place at join.specsavers.com/ca

Specsavers

eSight Go

A new outlook for those with low vision

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

Early this year, eSight will release its newest headset for visually impaired people. The eSight Go will serve as an effective way for optometrists to treat patients, in conjunction with traditional eyewear and other treatments.

eSight glasses capture high-quality video of the user's surroundings, which is displayed on screens in front of the user's eyes. This process can often enhance users' remaining vision, allowing them to see faces, read, and perform activities that would otherwise be difficult or impossible due to their vision impairment.

Since the beginning, everything eSight has designed is about improving the lives of people with low vision. "It's not just about helping people to read or watch TV," says Roland Mattern, director of sales and marketing at eSight. "We want to integrate this technology into everybody's day-to-day so they can go about living independently."





Designed for individuals with central visual loss, the eSight Go is particularly effective for conditions like age-related macular degeneration and Stargardt's disease. And its user-centric design is immediately noticeable.

"It's much smaller and lighter, so it cosmetically looks like a pair of cataract sunglasses or safety glasses," says Mattern. This aspect is crucial for users, who want discretion and normalcy in public.

The eSight Go's advanced features – a wider field of view, high-definition cameras, improved image stabilization – are complemented by its light weight of 169 grams, enhancing comfort and practicality for everyday use.

“

When somebody with 20/400 vision sees their spouse's face for the first time in years, it's unbelievable.

– Roland Mattern
Director of Sales and Marketing, eSight

But the eSight Go's impact transcends technical details.

"Now I can go for hours reading from a book or any document easily without having to take breaks because of headaches or trying to figure out what the text says," says Calgary eSight user Faizan Kazani, who was diagnosed with optic atrophy in grade school and first tried eSight last year.

"I got some guidance from an eSight coach who helped to get started and navigate through the various features of the device," says Kazani. "I began trying it on my own and started exploring how the device can be helpful to me to help through my vision challenges."

More than an assistive device, eSight Go is a gateway to experiences once thought lost, restoring independence to its users.

"When somebody with 20/400 vision sees their spouse's face for the first time in years, it's unbelievable," says Mattern.

eSight also aims to make this technology more accessible with a lower price point when customers use an optometrist referral. "Price is an obstacle in the larger community, and we're trying to push that down as much as possible."

Integrating eSight into Optometric Practice

The role of optometrists in introducing patients to eSight is pivotal.

"My doctor was unaware of eSight until I wore it into his office," says Toronto's Gary Foster, who's been wearing different versions of eSight devices for a decade to combat the effects of macular degeneration. "He was astounded when I read to the bottom of the eye chart."

Optometrists are uniquely positioned to inform and educate patients about the eSight Go, bridging the gap between emerging technologies and patients who can benefit most from them.

Foster says that by staying informed about innovations like the eSight Go, ECPs can play a crucial role in improving their patients' quality of life.

"I sincerely wish they would be aware of the features of this device and what it means to people like me who can really use it," he says.

In an era where technology often feels impersonal, the eSight Go offers the promise of a brighter, more inclusive future. As Mattem puts it, "It's the human impact of this device that makes it so special."

Visit eSight.com to learn more. **OP**



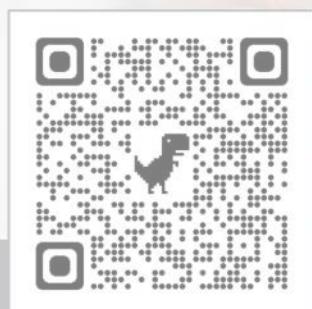
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No Waiting

Putting patients first, every step of the way

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

There are no waiting rooms in Dr. Natasha Randhawa's clinics. In fact, she doesn't even believe in the concept of waiting for eye care.

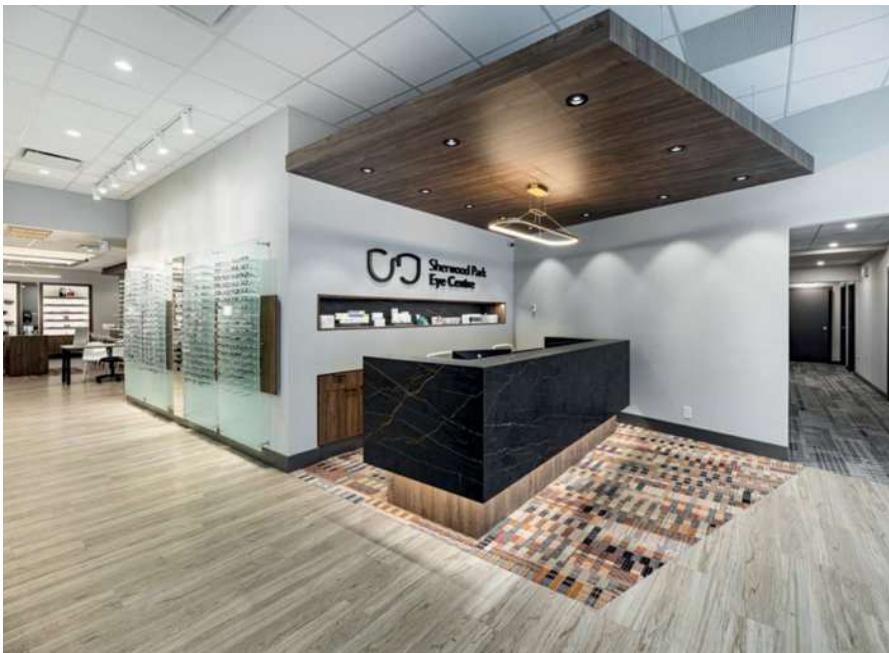
Randhawa, owner of Sherwood Park and Lendrum Eye Centres in Edmonton, Alberta, has redefined the standards of eye care through her innovative management and design strategies.

Several years into her professional optometry career, Randhawa became an eye care entrepreneur. She bought her clinics from established owners and expertly navigated the process of inheriting their clients while simultaneously attracting new ones.

When Randhawa renovated her first 6,000-square-foot office, she did so with the patient experience in mind. For example, in her Sherwood Park location, she meticulously planned the layout to ensure a smooth flow of operations, from the front desk to the examination rooms, and on to the optical showroom at the end of the appointment.

"Our design focuses on an efficient workflow; we avoid any backflow in the clinic," says Randhawa. Every stop a patient makes is intentional and streamlined, ensuring they never have to backtrack."

The renovation, which was completed without closing the clinic for even a day, was



“Our design focuses on an efficient workflow; we avoid any backflow in the clinic. Every stop a patient makes is intentional and streamlined, ensuring they never have to backtrack.”

— Dr. Natasha Randhawa

executed in phases, leveraging her family's construction background. This strategic approach minimized disruption to patient care and showcased her ability to balance operational demands with patient needs.

"We opened six days a week, and after work on Saturdays, we would start the renovation work," she recalls. "Every weekend was dedicated to transforming the clinic and ensuring we were operational by Monday morning."

The diverse teams at her clinics ensures that patients can receive treatment in the language they are most comfortable with (Randhawa herself speaks English, French and Punjabi).

"I believe in putting culture first on our team," she says. "A happy working environment is key. We rarely lose staff because they feel valued and content in their roles."

SUCCESS STORY

So how does this successful entrepreneur and mother of three do it all? It's simple: she doesn't.

"My answer to that question is always, 'I don't,' because I have an amazing team that does so much and allows me to stop working when I'm not at work." The same goes for her home life. "Balancing my roles as a mom, optometrist and entrepreneur was challenging. I had to accept that being a mom is not the only aspect of my identity, and I have a very supportive partner."

Through her innovative management, patient-centric design ethics and entrepreneurial spirit, Randhawa sets a new standard in eye care, offering invaluable lessons for aspiring entrepreneurs in any field.

And in case you're wondering if Randhawa's family is going to help her renovate a third clinic: "They said 'no more' after the first one. We say it's kind of like childbirth – you think you'll never forget, but then you forget and you go through it again." **OP**

Keys to Success

Dr. Randhawa's top tips for aspiring entrepreneurs



UNDERSTAND YOUR STRENGTHS & LIMITATIONS

Recognize what you excel at and where you may need support. Building a strong team that complements your skills is crucial.



FOCUS ON THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE

In healthcare, the patient's experience is paramount. Design your practice not just for aesthetics, but for functionality and patient comfort.



BALANCE IS KEY

Remember that personal fulfillment and professional success are not mutually exclusive. Strive for a balance that respects both aspects of your life.



STAY PATIENT-CENTRIC

Always prioritize the needs and comfort of your patients. Their satisfaction and well-being should be at the heart of all decisions.



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& CITYLINE

- Combine fashion science with optical savvy to take your business to the next level
- Elevate your team from "order-takers" to "eyewear stylists"
- Lead the sales conversation to increase capture rate

"Within weeks of this sales training, my team more than tripled our multi-pair sales, with some patients buying 3 pairs."

- DR. LYNDSEY KAY, Waterdown Optometric



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Eye-catching Products

A selection of stylish, unique and innovative eyewear and eye care items we're loving this month

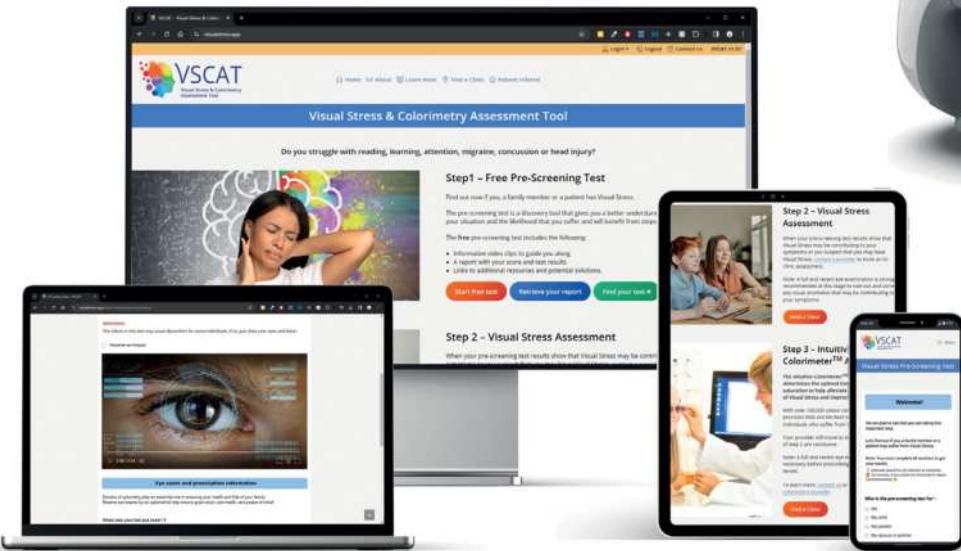


G CUBE FABRIC CHAIN EYEWEAR

GUESS sunglasses are paired with a matching patterned chain made of colourful fabric and decorated with the G Cube motif, inspired by the "Colors of Life" clothing line. marcolin.com

OYOBLOCK TRAVEL CASE

This elegant travel case from OYOBLOCK has three compartments to organize and protect glasses while travelling. The case is padded to safeguard and protect eyewear during business or leisure travel. oyobox.com/chocolate-brown-travel-case.html



VISUAL STRESS & COLORIMETRY ASSESSMENT TOOL

Optical has developed an innovative FREE visual stress pre-screening test. This user-friendly tool is designed to

streamline your diagnostic process and provide valuable insights into potential visual stress issues.

visualstress.app/pre-screening-test/



EYERIS 1 EYE MASSAGER

This at-home eye massager helps to relieve eye strain, puffiness and dry eyes after a long day of work or study. Includes a remote control and Bluetooth capability.

renpho.ca/products/eyeris-1-eye-massager

Future Focus

AI in eye care

BY DR. MARTIN SPIRO, CAO President

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in eye care has recently featured prominently in continuing education programs, research topics, and discussions in leadership and regulatory circles. And when it comes to daily life, AI is so pervasive that it's almost mundane. From wearable devices offering health tips based on our biometric information, to the algorithms that shape our online experience, AI is everywhere.

The tools that increase efficiency in our daily activities also have implications for eye care delivery. Massive data sets and algorithms in AI have the potential to improve patient care, streamline processes and advance research.

A key strength of AI is prediction. Analysis of historical health data can help predict disease onset, progression and



The utility of AI isn't limited to booking and managing appointments. Trend identification, sales predictions and inventory management allow us to offer products and services that cater to evolving consumer preferences and anticipate market demands with greater accuracy, enhancing customer satisfaction and maximizing operational efficiency.

When it comes to clinical applications, the potential of AI to transform eye care is even more impressive. We frequently refer to the eyes as "the windows to overall health," and this idea is even more relevant when applied to AI's capability of assessing and parsing data.

AI can assist with booking, triaging and records management, reducing administrative burdens and freeing up staff.

outcomes, allowing eye care providers to intervene early, potentially preventing or mitigating issues.

Increased predictive ability can reduce uncertainty in all aspects of eye care and practice management, but as powerful as it is, AI can't replace you or your team. Effective use of AI can assist with efficient booking, triaging and records management, reducing administrative burdens and freeing up staff for hands-on tasks and the personalized care patients expect.

We see this in new areas of research like oculomics, which examines biomarkers in ocular imaging to provide further insights into systemic diseases. As this body of knowledge grows, so does the potential for developing tailored and data-driven approaches to diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of disease.

Along with the promise of AI come potential risks that demand careful consideration, especially in the context of healthcare. One critical concern is data security, requiring

robust measures to safeguard against unauthorized access and breaches of sensitive patient information. The risk of bias in AI algorithms also poses challenges – particularly if the training data is not diverse, potentially leading to inaccuracies or disparities in diagnosis and treatment across different demographic groups.

Addressing issues of liability and accountability demands the simultaneous development of clear regulations, standards, ethical guidelines and legal frameworks. These measures are essential to ensure equitable practices while fostering trust between patients and practitioners.

Supporting the responsible and effective application of AI can benefit both patients and practitioners by expanding access to care, facilitating collaboration and enhancing diagnostic capabilities. When applied prudently, AI tools can ensure we provide better preventive care and treatment options and improve operational efficiency in our practices.

AI and technologies are not panaceas, nor are humans infallible. But when these elements converge, their combined strengths have vast potential. Approaching AI as a complement to human expertise, rather than a replacement, can open our eyes to unexplored possibilities. **OP**

THE CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF OPTOMETRISTS (CAO) is the national voice of optometry, providing leadership and support to more than 5,400 members to enhance the delivery of healthy eyes and clear vision for all Canadians.

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Navigating the Future

Augmented and virtual realities transforming eye care

BY CLAUDIA ROJAS, RO, RCLP

In a world driven by constant technological innovation, the optical industry finds itself on the brink of a transformative journey fuelled by augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). These emerging technologies hold the promise of revolutionizing how customers and patients experience eyewear and eye care, while also presenting novel avenues for collaboration and efficiency between eye care professionals.

Imagine stepping into an optical store where mirrors become interactive screens, allowing customers to virtually try on an endless array of frames in the blink of an eye. This isn't science fiction; it's the future promised by the integration of AR technology. Augmented reality is poised to redefine the eyewear shopping experience, offering customers an immersive and dynamic way

to explore different styles, colours and fits – all while streamlining the decision-making process, enhancing overall efficiency for both customers and opticians.

From virtually trying on frames to receiving personalized style recommendations, AR has the power to enhance customer satisfac-

Imagine opticians immersing themselves in virtual environments to enhance their skills, from mastering frame fitting techniques to staying updated on the latest lens advancements.

tion and enhance the purchase journey. The fusion of technology and fashion in the optical retail space opens new possibilities for engaging and delighting customers, marking a significant shift from traditional approaches.

Beyond the showroom, AR has the potential to reshape the landscape of eye exams. Picture a scenario where optometrists leverage AR to conduct comprehensive examinations with unparalleled precision, while providing a more in-depth analysis of patients' eye health. This could lead to quicker assessments, more accurate prescriptions and a personalized approach to vision correction, meeting the demands of time-conscious consumers seeking both convenience and optimal eye care.

The implications of VR extend beyond the consumer realm, offering a novel approach to training and education within the optical industry. Imagine opticians immersing themselves in virtual environments to enhance their skills, from mastering frame fitting techniques to staying updated on the latest lens advancements and understanding the intricate details of lens manufacturing. This not only meets the needs of a dynamic workforce, but also ensures that consumers are served by knowledgeable and adept professionals.

While the potential benefits are evident, challenges and considerations accompany the integration of AR and VR in the optical industry. Questions about data security, user privacy, and the learning curve for both professionals and consumers must be addressed. Striking the right balance between technological innovation and ethical responsibility will be paramount for a seamless integration that meets consumer demands while respecting their privacy.

As the optical industry navigates the transformative frontier of optics and augmented realities, collaboration between optometrists and opticians becomes pivotal. Envision a future where optometrists would be able to focus their expertise on comprehensive eye health, while delegating specific refracting activities to opticians. This collaborative work would empower optometrists to focus on complex diagnostic aspects and patient care, while opticians actively contribute to a streamlined and holistic vision correction approach, creating a seamless continuum of care.

This collaboration not only enhances the overall patient and customer experience, but also exemplifies the efficiency gains achievable when professionals with diverse expertise work synergistically.

As we stand at the intersection of optics and augmented realities, the optical industry is at the forefront of a revolution. Augmented and virtual realities are not just reshaping the way customers experience eyewear, but are also redefining the landscape of eye exams and the collaborative dynamics between optometrists and opticians.

The optical horizon, enriched by AR and VR, offers a glimpse into a future where technology enhances every facet of the industry – from the aesthetics of eyewear selection to the precision of eye exams. As optometrists and opticians embrace collaboration and leverage these technologies, they not only ensure operational efficiency, but also pave the way for an industry that is agile, innovative, and committed to delivering exceptional eye care experiences for years to come. The future of optics is not just in sight; it's being crafted through the harmonious integration of technology and expertise. **OP**

Claudia Rojas is president of the Opticians Association of Canada (OAC) and president of OAC's British Columbia Chapter. The OAC's mission is to promote licensed opticians and the profession, maintain professional standards, and educate and inform consumers about eye health. For more information, visit opticians.ca.

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M is for Meetings

How to improve your meeting game

BY NANCY DEWALD, Lead Up Training and Consulting



If you're looking for game-changing strategies as you enter this new year, I challenge you to improve your meeting game. You may feel that meetings are time wasters – and truthfully, poorly managed and ill-defined meetings are indeed a waste of time. But staff meetings are an essential part of any organization, as they provide a platform for communication, collaboration, feedback and problem-solving.

I know that many of you are currently having what I call “hallway meetings,” where you communicate in the hallways as you walk past each other. It's no surprise when things don't get executed properly using this approach. We can do better!

There are different meeting formats for different purposes; one style does not fit all needs. In this article, I share strategies from the teachings of Patrick Lencioni, best known as the creator of The Five Behaviors, a training program that assists in building productive and cohesive teams. (FYI, I am now certified to facilitate this program.)

Here are four types of meetings:

1 Daily Check-in

Duration: 5 to 10 mins.

In this meeting, we connect informally to help the team prioritize and allocate resources for the day. Everyone remains standing, which helps to keep it short.

This meeting should highlight information such as schedule updates, special testing required, vendor appointments, week-to-date results, staff roles for the day and tasks that need to be completed.

2 Weekly Tactical

Duration: 45 to 90 mins.

The objective here is to review primary objectives and resolve issues. This is a time to inspire and encourage the team to execute on the plan that is already in place – not a time to start new projects.

Do not set an agenda in advance. Instead, start the meeting by reviewing the objectives and current results, then set the agenda based on what is important to the team regarding reaching the objective.

This is what it could look like: If you are working on implementing dry eye, review the results/progress, discuss wins and obstacles, collaborate and brainstorm on how to overcome obstacles.

3 Strategic

Duration: 2 to 4 hours

Strategy meetings are ideally held on a monthly basis, to discuss and brainstorm around issues affecting long-term success (for example, how to fill the schedule when we are struggling). If a pressing matter comes up during the weekly tactical meeting, you may need to have an ad hoc strategy meeting.

conflict is key to a healthy team, and encouraging people to respectfully share their opinions (or disagree) helps them feel heard and valued.

4 Off-site Quarterly

Duration: 1 day

At this meeting – which can be limited to leaders only – we review the performance of the team, assess the market and explore the competitive landscape. Keep these discussions at the idea stage and leave the tactics to the tactical meeting.

With all meetings, ensure that you provide clarity as to what the participants should expect and if they need to come prepared with anything. Also, remember to have some fun!

Staff meetings are an essential part of any organization, as they provide a platform for communication, collaboration, feedback and problem-solving.

Use a hook for this meeting versus an agenda. A hook is a statement about what the focus is and what is at risk if we don't resolve the issue. Sort of like a movie preview versus a scene-by-scene description of what happens.

Involving your people so they are heard helps with buy-in, and ultimately, success. Your team has great ideas – be open to them. As a leader, you do not have to have all the answers.

These meetings should be interactive and involve conflict. Yes, you read that right –

You may be asking yourself how this approach offers a competitive advantage. Effective meetings provide constant communication and focus on team results. The team will be more aligned, engaged – and in turn, more effective. I encourage you to give it a try and see the results! As always, let me know if I can help. **OP**

Nancy Dewald is a business development professional, workshop facilitator and optical industry veteran. She is CEO and founder of Lead Up Training and Consulting, which specializes in identifying business gaps, implementing solutions and developing leaders. To find out more, visit leaduptrainingandconsulting.com.

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- ✓ Implement Processes to Run Your Business More Effectively
- ✓ Get Results for Maximum Profitability



Nancy has a wealth of knowledge in all things Optometry!

- DR. N RANDHAWA

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- DR. HEATHER COWIE, Airdrie Family Eye Doctors

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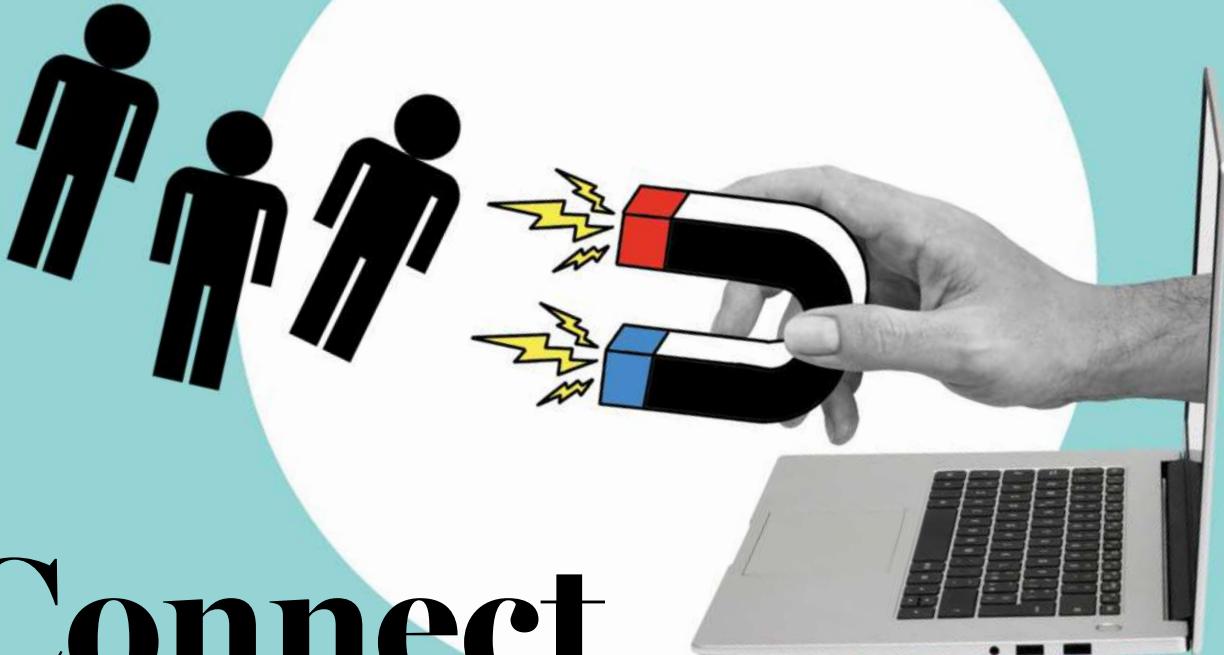
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Connect for Success!

Why digital marketing is so important for your business

BY KERI SCULLAND, Marketing4ECPs

Digital marketing is an essential part of modern eye care practice management, enabling you to attract new patients, establish a strong online presence and build lasting relationships with your audience.

By having a fast, user-friendly website, publishing educational blogs, engaging on social media, sending interesting emails and creating impactful ads, you can differentiate yourself from the competition, position your practice as a trusted authority, and

ultimately help more people see clearly and maintain good eye health.

Start implementing these digital marketing tactics today and realize the benefits of a strong online presence for your eye care practice.

HAVE A FAST, USER-FRIENDLY WEBSITE

Your website is the virtual face of your eye care practice, and it's often the first place potential patients visit to learn more about your services, staff and location. A well-designed and optimized website can help position your

practice as a trustworthy authority in the eye care industry and attract more patients.

Make sure your website has a fast loading time, is mobile-responsive, and is easy to navigate. Include important pages like About Us, Services, Location and Contact Us on your navigation, and have clear calls to action (CTAs) that encourage visitors to contact your practice or schedule an appointment.

Keep your website content up-to-date, and optimize it for search engines so people can find you when searching for related keywords.

PUBLISH EDUCATIONAL BLOGS

Educational blogs are a powerful tool to showcase your expertise in eye care, educate your audience about eye health, and provide value to current and potential patients. Writing blog posts on a regular basis can help you increase your website traffic, establish yourself as a thought leader in the industry, and improve your search engine rankings.

Brainstorm blog topics that would be relevant and useful to your audience, and make sure your writing is informative, engaging and easy to understand. Share your blog

your audience, promote your services, and increase patient retention.

Segment your email list based on demographics, interests and past interactions with your practice, and send targeted messages that speak directly to each group. Include valuable content like educational articles, special offers and business updates, and make sure your emails are visually appealing and mobile-optimized.

Monitor your email open and click rates and adjust your strategy as needed.

pay a fee. PPC allows you to target your ads to the specific geographic location and demographic profile of your ideal patients, maximizing your advertising budget and minimizing waste.

Social media advertising is another powerful tool for reaching your target audience. Advertising on social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram (which are owned by Meta), allow you to target potential patients based on demographics, interests and behaviours. By creating visually appealing and informative ads, you can draw in new patients and create brand awareness. Social media advertising also allows you to retarget individuals who have already visited your website, increasing the chances of conversion.

FIND THE MAGIC MARKETING MIX

Combining your website with a variety of marketing tools will help you reach your target audience, attract new patients and retain your existing patients. You can try to strike the perfect balance on your own if you have an in-house marketing manager, or speak with a qualified marketing company to help you achieve your business goals. **OP**

posts on your website, social media channels and email newsletters to reach a wider audience.

ENGAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram are great places to connect with your patients and community, share eye care-related content and promote your services. By consistently engaging with your followers, you can build brand loyalty, increase website traffic, and attract and retain patients.

Create a social media strategy that aligns with your business goals and target audience. Post regularly, respond to comments and messages, share high-quality visuals, and use relevant hashtags to increase your reach.

PAY-PER-CLICK, META & DIGITAL ADVERTISING

Pay-per-click (PPC) advertising is an effective way to reach potential patients who are actively searching for eye care services. With PPC, you can bid on keywords related to eye care services and place ads that appear in the top positions of search engine results pages (SERPs). When a potential patient clicks on your ad, you

Keri Sculland is the manager of editing and content strategy at Marketing4ECPs. Learn more about Keri and Marketing4ECPs at marketing4ecps.com.

SEND INTERESTING EMAILS

Email marketing is a cost-effective way to send personalized messages to your patients and build lasting relationships. An effective email marketing strategy can help you educate



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STYLE OF THE MONTH

BOLD EXPRESSION

These women's Carrera 3036 optical frames in acetate are anything but basic with their bold angles and robust proportions. From the Flag product family – the boldest expression of Carrera – they convey the brand's daring attitude with their distinctive faceted cat-eye design, elevated by the Carrera "C" metal logo embossed on the temples. Subtle metal embellishment is visible on the front, adding a touch of elegance. Available in brown blue Havana, brown horn, transparent grey, green horn and black.



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