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JANUARY 2025 • VOL. 43 • NO. 1

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OPTICAL PRISM

JANUARY 2025 • VOL. 43 • NO. 1

Serious Specs

Bold, stylish eyewear that exudes confidence

CANADA'S VISION STRATEGY

Uniting Canada to prioritize eye health for all

MOCHA MANIA

Frames that spotlight Pantone's Colour of the Year

LEAD WITH CLARITY

How to align your leadership team

Vision for All

Empowering the workplace through inclusive vision practices

VISION & VANITY

Expand your practice scope with "eyesthetics"

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References: 1. CV data on file 2023, independent research, Canada; online survey of 150 ECPs who prescribe contact lenses. Footnote: Based on 149 respondents to the question, "Which one brand of monthly replacement soft contact lenses do you trust the most for your patients?", and "Which onebrand of toric soft contact lenses do you recommend most often for your patients with astigmatism?" 2. Reference: CV data on file 2023, independent research, Canada; Online survey of 150 ODs in Canada who prescribe contact lenses. Footnote: Based on 148 respondents to the question "Which one monthly replacement brand of multifocal soft contact lenses do you recommend most often for your patients with presbyopia?" and "Which one brand of monthly replacement soft contact lenses do you recommend most often for your patients?" SA11404 ©2024 CooperVision.

January 2025

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY JESSICA WAUGH

“Most professionals spend most, if not their entire career, looking in the rear-view mirror. They sit down with their accountant once a year, but what we want to do is start looking forward.”

— Tim Paziuk
Certified financial planner and
chair of TPC Financial

Minding Your Own Business

As we step into a brand-new year, there's no better time to reflect on the goals you have for your practice and how you plan to achieve them. For opticians and optometrists managing their own businesses, the start of the year offers a unique opportunity to revisit strategies, adopt smarter practices, and position yourself for a profitable 2025.

Running a successful practice is about more than delivering exceptional patient care. It's about balancing the art of medicine with the business knowledge required to thrive in an ever-changing market.

This issue of *Optical Prism* is dedicated to helping eye care professionals navigate the business side of practice ownership with confidence.

Our feature writer, David Goldberg has curated insights from industry experts and real-world practitioners to provide you with actionable advice. From optimizing your operations to exploring alternate revenue streams, our goal is to equip you with the tools to thrive.

It's with this in mind that we introduce Money Watch a new column by author and certified financial advisor Tim Paziuk. Tim offers eye care professionals straight forward advice on how to navigate the road to financial freedom both personally and professionally.

This issue also introduces our new Ask the Expert column where optometrist and educator Dr. Rob Kloepfer answers questions about today's optometry challenges.

The business theme continues with Style Eyes where we highlight bold and stylish eye wear that commands attention in the boardroom and beyond.

Finally, our January issue wouldn't be complete without showcasing a selection of frames in Pantone's 2025 Colour of the Year, Mocha Mousse, a warm, rich brown hue that compliments any skin tone.

As you turn these pages, I hope you find inspiration, clarity, and actionable ideas to implement in your practice.

Here's to a year of success, and vision—in every sense of the word.

SUZANNE LACORTE
Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

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*Essilor, #1 in spectacle lenses worldwide - Euromonitor, Eyewear 2021 edition; Essilor International company, worldwide retail value sales at RSP. **Compared to single vision lenses, when worn by children at least 12 hours per day every day. Bao, J., Huang, X., Li, X., Yang, A., Zhou, F., Wu, J., Wang, C., Li, Y., Lin, T.W., Spiegel, D.L., Dooze, B., Chen, H., 2022. Spectacle lenses for Myopia control vs Single-Vision Spectacle Lenses: A Randomized Clinical Trial, in China. JAMA Ophthalmol. 100(5), 472-478. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaophthalmol.2022.0401>



FRESH LOOKS

READ ON

'Read On Light' is the latest innovation from Sandra Kaufmann and Monika Fink, cofounders of Swiss eyewear brand Sol Sol Ito. These ultra-light, colourful reading glasses embody Swiss design principles: precision, zeitgeist, and innovation. Following their 2021 debut—a slim, TR90 design stored in smartphone cases—feedback revealed a gap for sleek, portable readers. 'Read On Light' fills this niche with bold, contemporary style, redefining convenience and design for modern readers.

For more information
visit readon-mobile.com

Fresh LOOKS

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



LINDA FARROW

Linda Farrow unveils “Sweet Indulgence” Collection 2, celebrating the luxury of the holiday season with Renaissance-inspired portraiture. Moving away from traditional holiday visuals, this moody editorial style brings sophistication to December fashion. The collection includes five sunglass styles—Celia, Paloma, Nieve,

Cara, and Calthorpe—offering designs for every taste and face shape. Highlights include the glamorous 70s-inspired Paloma and the angular Nieve, featuring tones of pink, tangerine, and festive colours.

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



Cara



Nieve



Calthorpe



MM5151



MM5157

MAX MARA

Max Mara Eyewear unveils new Maxim styles for the Autumn/Winter season, featuring the brand's signature geometric metal element. The Maxim design enhances the eyes with sophistication, reflecting Max Mara's elegant allure. This golden symbol captures light, creat-

ing movement and a sense of richness. A timeless emblem, it evokes emotion and memories, embodying the brand's promise of lasting style and charisma across generations.

For more information contact your Marcolin sales representative or visit marcolin.com



Valencia



Chad

HARDEM

Now available in Canada! Handcrafted Argentine eyewear made from premium acetate, each pair features polarized lenses with UV400 protection. The Valencia sunglasses exude elegance and exclusivity with their shiny beige and tortoiseshell accents, light blue temple detail and grey degrade lenses. The black Chad sunglasses with gold plated logo on the temple along with the light blue finish adds a subtle, stylish and playful touch.



Join us at MIDO 2025 Pavilion 01 Stand E03 or visit hardem.ca/ca/op

FRESH LOOKS



Charles



Yvonne

OGI EYEWEAR

OGI Eyewear's Spring 2025 collections combine bold colors and striking shapes with individuality and balance. Vibrant hues like cherry red and electric blue replace neutrals, while oversized frames make a statement. Chief Creative Officer David Duralde ensures these designs enhance personal style without overwhelming wearers.

OGI's iconic use of color continues with architectural designs, pairing vibrant hues with subdued palettes in bevelled frames like North Star. Oversized styles such as Minnehaha Mist and Hurtle Durtle redefine bold eyewear with sophistication and flair.

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



Hurtle Durtle



North Star



Minnehaha Mist



LO761S



OPHY

Eredità Eyewear proudly welcomes Ophy Eyewear to its curated collection. Blending bold architectural forms with inspiration from futurism and modern art, Ophy redefines contemporary eyewear. Rooted in Italian craftsmanship and influenced by its owner's boutique winery, the brand masterfully balances tradition and innovation. Each frame exudes artistic sophistication, celebrating individuality and style.

Eredità Eyewear continues its mission to champion independent brands that prioritize quality and creativity. The addition of Ophy Eyewear enhances this vision with designs that embody art, architecture, and Italian elegance. Explore Ophy Eyewear—a harmonious fusion of craftsmanship and modern design.

For more information contact your Eredità sales representative or visit ereditaeyewear.com

LONGCHAMP

The Longchamp Fall/Winter 2024 eyewear collection offers a timeless, refined interpretation of the brand's iconic aesthetic. Crafted from premium materials, this season's extraordinary designs showcase rich colors and signature accents, reflecting the Maison's vision of French elegance. With bold yet feminine styling, epitomized by the sunglasses highlighted in the Fall/Winter ad campaign, these pieces embody the contemporary taste and sophisticated allure of the Longchamp woman.

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



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FRESH LOOKS



Bella Vista

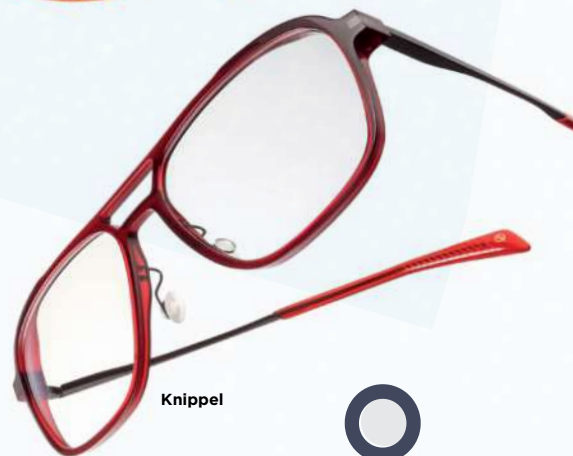
ØRGREEN

Ørgreen Optics introduces the Acetate Cut collection, a fusion of simplicity and functionality, blending iconic features from its titanium collection. The capsule includes five styles with monochromatic acetate fronts and titanium temples, offering ultra-slim contours and defined edges. The high-density acetate ensures durability and a refined finish, available in transparent and translucent tones. Titanium temples provide lightweight durability, with thoughtful details like the 'Ørgreen' logo. The collection features adjustable nose pads and OBE spring hinges for comfort and longevity, merging innovative design with sustainable practices.

For more information contact your Ørgreen sales representative or visit orgreenoptics.com



Modernist



Knippel



SK2901
Kaffepannan



SK2902
Fors



SK2173
Langhammar

MODO

MODO Eyewear's Brooklyn Made collection introduces two hand-crafted styles for Fall/Winter 2024. Monroe, a chic cat-eye for women, comes in vibrant hues like Pink and Olive Green. Bay, a retro square frame for men, features colors such as Deep Burgundy and Grey Green. Crafted in Brooklyn, these frames celebrate

American innovation with bold designs, modern plastic temples, and unique detailing. A perfect blend of style and craftsmanship defines this standout collection.

For more information contact your MODO sales representative or visit modo.com

SKAGA

The Fall/Winter 2024 Skaga eyewear collection draws inspiration from Swedish nature and minimalist design. Featuring sculptural temple detailing inspired by Gotland's "Raukar" lime-stone monoliths, the frames use Acetate Renew, a sustainable material made from bio-based and recycled sources. The collection includes the feminine SK2902 Fors, the bold SK2901 Kaffepannan, and the retro-round SK2173 Langhammar, all crafted for comfort and style with adjustable nose pads, five-barrel spring hinges, and a focus on eco-friendly, premium materials.

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



Bay and
Monroe

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clariti® 1 day
multifocal 3 Add

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*Pricing is based on manufacturers published MSRP and rebates as of 11/1/23.

1. CVI data on file 2021. Prospective, double-masked, bilateral, one-week dispensing study with clariti® 1 day multifocal 3 add with a rating of 88 out of 10; n=90 habitual MFCL wearers 2. CVI data on file 2021. Prospective, double-masked, bilateral, one-week dispensing study with clariti® 1 day multifocal 3 add, with ratings from 85 to 89 out of 100; n=90 habitual MFCL wearers. 3. CVI data on file 2024. Based on prescription option combinations (sph and add) available across all daily disposable multifocal soft lenses from CVI, J&J, B&L and Alcon in USA Feb 2024.

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FEATURE

Financial Focus\$

Why you need to take a closer look at
your clinic's financial health in 2025

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

An eye care professional's mission is to master the art of helping patients see more clearly, but sometimes things tend to get a little blurry when it comes to their own financial situation. Running a practice means balancing patient care with the intricate demands of managing staff, inventory, negotiating with suppliers, and paying the bills. Even the most brilliant ECPs can feel overwhelmed, especially during tax season.

Costs are rising, the economic outlook has never been murkier, and optical owners need to adjust their books accordingly; in 2025, ECPs will need to embrace strategies for resilience and growth, and *Optical Prism* spoke with three experts who each offer a prescription for financial clarity.

For some ECPs, managing money is something they only think about once a year—like Halloween—but a lot scarier.

Costs are rising, the economic outlook has never been murkier, and optical owners need to adjust their books accordingly; in 2025, ECPs will need to embrace strategies for resilience and growth, and *Optical Prism* spoke with three experts who each offer a prescription for financial clarity.

"Too many doctors don't know their financials until the year is over," says Dr. Kerry Salsberg, a second-generation optometrist and owner of Eyes on Sheppard in Toronto.

For Salsberg, running one of Toronto's largest independent practices requires meticulous bookkeeping, budgeting, and financial forecasting. His practice employs a team of 40, including eight doctors, in a 10,000-square-foot office, but Salsberg says his financial philosophies can work for practices of all sizes.

"We look at our numbers every quarter," he says. "It's about taking the pulse of your practice daily, weekly, and quarterly. I'm always on my computer looking at the numbers."

He and his team focus on key performance indicators, also known as KPIs, which are measurable data points that reveal how well

different areas of the business are performing. Metrics like revenue per staff hour, frame turnover, and capture rates provide early warnings of inefficiencies, allowing Salsberg to address potential losses before they spiral out of control.

"The way I see it, every dollar I invest should return three dollars," he says.

"Cutting expenses is easy, but the hard part is strategically investing in your practice to create significant returns."



"Most professionals spend most, if not their entire career, looking in the rear-view mirror. They sit down with their accountant once a year, but what we want to do is start looking forward."

— Tim Paziuk

Certified financial planner and
chair of TPC Financial

Focus on the Future

For many ECPs, financial tracking stops at reviewing last year's numbers, a practice that may help diagnose past missteps but rarely positions a business for future success.

"Most professionals spend most, if not their entire career, looking in the rear-view mirror," says Tim Paziuk, certified financial planner and chair of TPC Financial. "They sit down with their accountant once a year, but what we want to do is start looking forward."

Part of that forward-thinking mentality is anticipating rising supplier costs and being prepared for fluctuating interest rates.

These factors can catch small business owners off guard, and that's why every ECP's budget should include a buffer. Flexibility, it turns out, is an essential part of financial planning.

Nancy Dewald of LeadUp Training & Consulting encourages ECPs to build contingency plans for sudden rises in expenditures. Stay ahead of price increases and negotiate strategically with suppliers to secure rates that benefit your bottom line.

"My strategy is don't deal with every single supplier," she says. "Find your preferred suppliers and work primarily with them so that you can get the best volume discounts and pricing."

And don't buy more stock than you can move, or you'll end up with boxes upon boxes of depreciating products.

"Too many frames or outdated products can tie up money unnecessarily," says Dewald.

Inventory management, she explains, is commonly overlooked as a key factor in practice profitability. Practices should routinely review their stock to identify slow-moving products and clear out old frames through promotions, bundling, or staff incentives.

Risk vs. Reward

Are you thinking about expanding the services your clinic offers? Experts say a detailed review is necessary before making any big financial commitments.

"If you're going to add anything to your business, you need to do a break-even analysis to know how to recoup that money," says Dewald. Break-even analysis, she explains, is a critical step that many practice owners skip when investing in new technologies or services. Without understanding the full costs—training staff, increased maintenance, and even higher energy bills—ECPs can find themselves blindsided by expenses they didn't anticipate.

"Planning isn't just numbers on a page; it's strategy," says Dewald.

In terms of spending trends, Salsberg has noted some ECPs are abandoning optical sales and contact lenses in favour of diag-

nostic and therapeutic services.

"I think a lot of people have given up on the optical and contact lens areas of their business because it's competitive and harder to gain traction with patients," he says. "But I think abandoning these areas is a big mistake."

According to Salsberg, many doctors are shifting toward a medical-based practice because it faces less competition, allows them to dictate fees, and involves fewer players. However, he warns that giving up on retail revenue streams could backfire in the long run.

"If you forego optical and contact lens sales, it's only a matter of time before corporate players start competing with us in the medical model," he says.

Salsberg believes optometrists should lean into their established patient base.

"We own those patients," he says.

And while the ambition behind the expansion is admirable, don't overstretch, says Dewald. She advises ECPs to let go of the idea that they must offer every service themselves.

"If you have a special interest in something and you want to go a little deeper in it, just focus on that and do it well," she says. "If you can't do it all, find a peer to refer to, someone who will refer their patients back to you, so it's a reciprocal relationship."

Dewald believes that collaboration is often underutilized in the eye care industry.

"In our industry, we don't do that very well, and the only person that suffers is the patient, because we're not serving them properly," she says.

Salaries, Contracts & Estate Planning

Incorporated ECPs face crucial choices when it comes to financial planning, and financial planner Tim Paziuk stresses the importance of revisiting these decisions annually. Whether to take a salary or dividends is a particularly important choice, influenced by individual circumstances and evolving tax regulations.

"Often, they'll talk to their accountant, and depending on what the accountant thinks — sometimes based on personal bias

— they'll be told to take a salary for things like RRSP room or the ability to set up an individual pension plan," says Paziuk.

However, he warns that federal tax rules can shift unexpectedly, making it vital to regularly review strategies.

ECP Practices in Canada by the Numbers

\$2 billion:

Annual revenue of the Canadian optometry industry

6,000:

Approximate number of optometrists practicing in Canada

10,410:

Total employees in the optometry industry nationwide

4,759:

Total number of optometry businesses across Canada.

SOURCE: Royale Financial Group

"If they reduce the dividend tax credits, then maybe you were taking a dividend before and you weren't taking a salary, but then the government changes the rules, and now all of a sudden, it's more advantageous for you to switch," he says.

Paziuk also highlights the critical role of estate planning, particularly in light of proposed changes to Canada's capital gains inclusion rates. Without careful planning, the tax burden on a business's assets after the death of its owners can be significant.

"Shareholder agreements need to address what happens if one principal predeceases the other," he says. "These agreements should clarify how shares are transferred and how taxes are managed."

Finally, Paziuk stresses the importance of proper employment contracts, an area that caused chaos for many practices during COVID-19 shutdowns.

"You'd be lucky if 25% of offices have employment contracts in place," he says.

When COVID-19 forced clinics to shut down, many employers were left scrambling to understand their obligations to staff, largely because there were no clear terms in place.

"What we learned very quickly in talking with the labour lawyers we work with is this: the first question they ask is, 'What does the employment contract say?' And most of the time, the answer is, 'We don't have one,'" says Paziuk.

This lack of documentation not only created confusion about employers' responsibilities but also exposed many practices to potential liability. "It's not just about pay. Employment contracts clarify everything — termination terms, responsibilities, and benefits — and without them, you're operating in a legal grey area," he says.

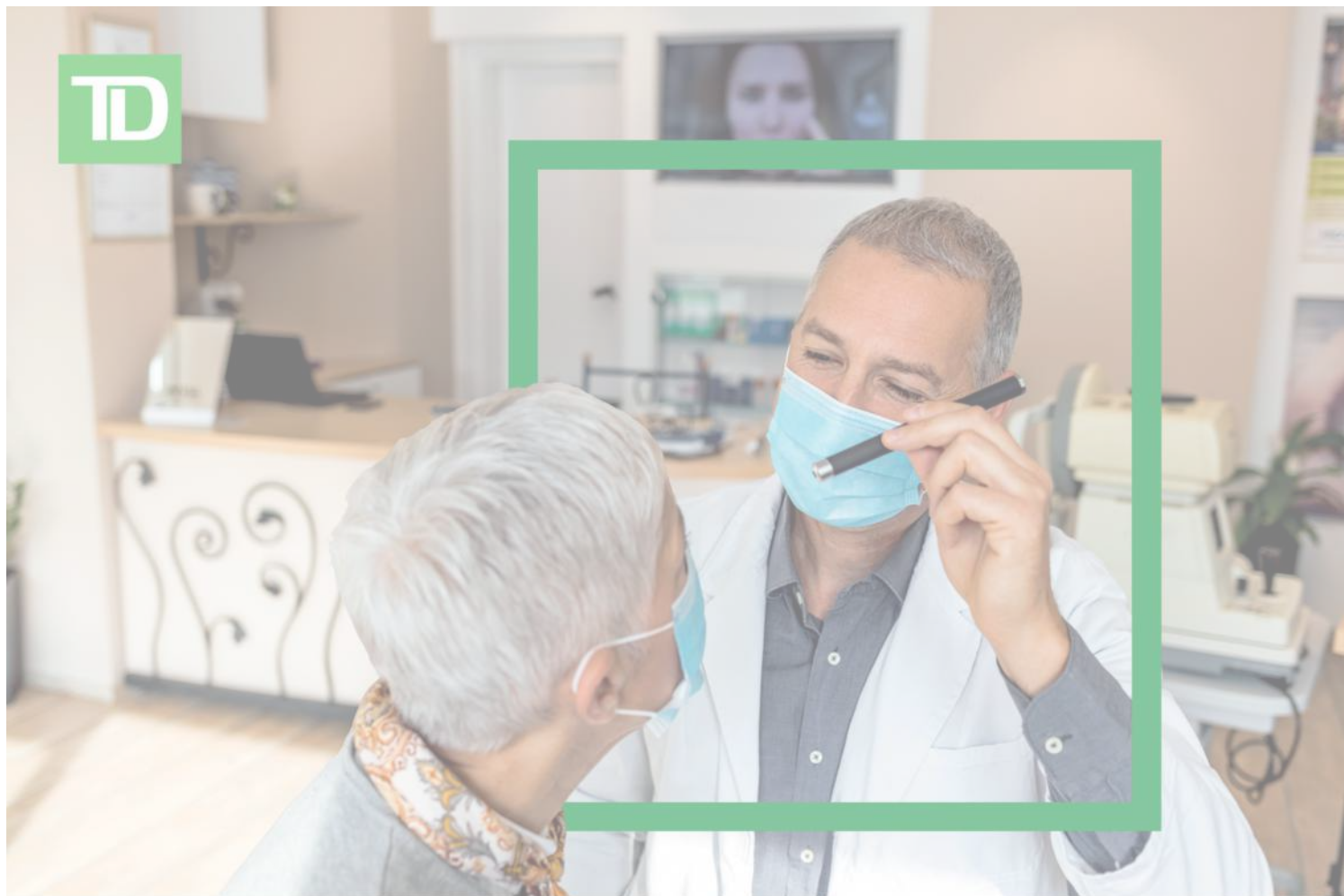
Paziuk adds that employment contracts are particularly critical when transitioning a business to new ownership.

"When you buy a clinic, it's the perfect opportunity to put fresh employment contracts in place for every staff member," he says. "This ensures everyone is starting with clear terms and prevents any misunderstandings down the line."

With proper employment contracts, ECPs can protect their businesses, provide clarity to employees, and avoid costly disputes.

"It's a small step that can save a lot of stress and financial strain in the future," says Paziuk.

Financial clarity isn't just about tracking numbers—it's about planning for the future and making decisions that set your practice up for success. With the right approach and professional guidance, ECPs can navigate challenges, seize opportunities, and ensure their practices thrive in the years to come. **OP**



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STYLE EYES

Serious SPECS

Bold, stylish eyewear that commands attention in the boardroom and beyond.
Discover frames designed to elevate your confidence in any setting.

BY SUZANNE LACORTE

1.

Style TIP

No need to blend in — step into the spotlight with sultry burgundy, elevated tortoise, or rich emerald frames that take center stage in your look. These statement-making designs are crafted to elevate your confidence and empower your chic aesthetic, showing the world you mean business with the intention to conquer your day in effortless style.

- WENDY BUCHANAN
Eyewear Image Expert

2.

1. Mia by Catherine de'Medici. 2. Be Bobo by Sabine Be
3. MK4119U Nassau by Michael Kors
4. DG3383 by Dolce & Gabbana
5. Primavista by Vint & York 6. JC3024U by Jimmy Choo
7. Snow by OGI Eyewear

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

MOCHA MOUSSE



Celebrate Pantone's Colour of the Year with sleek mocha-hued frames, blending timeless elegance and modern sophistication for every style.



1. Oxman by Le Parc 2. Llimona by Etnia Barcelona
3. Adored by Caron Eyewear 4. CC00050 by Chloé 5. Killa by Vint & York

Clarity



Without Compromise

ID MyStyle® 3 from HOYA Reimagines the Progressive Lens

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

When eye care professionals have a patient struggling with progressive lenses, the complaints are often about difficulty adapting and distorted peripheral vision. These issues can be even worse for patients who spend hours on digital devices, which is nearly everyone these days. Instead of forcing patients to adapt to outdated technology, HOYA Vision Care has introduced a new lens designed to be optimized for every wearer.

"Typically, patients like a lot of space for distance on their progressive lens, but then, unfortunately, that affects their near and intermediate fields," says Todd Deforest, a registered optician in Nova Scotia and HOYA's National Training and Development Manager. "We're still spending more time indoors than we ever have since the pandemic, so near and intermediate clarity are more important than ever."

HOYA's latest innovation, the iD MyStyle® 3, aims to address these challenges head-on. Available now for Canadian ECPs to prescribe and dispense, the lens introduces innovative upgrades and a streamlined assessment system that makes progressive lenses more adaptable for patients.

HOYA has introduced five distinct designs to better align lenses with patients' specific needs: Tyro, Modern, Detail, Adventure, and Expert. Each option caters to a different lifestyle and simplifies the selection process for ECPs.

"One of the issues this lens solves is the astigmatic peripheral distortion that's in every lens," says Deforest. "In the past, if you changed one portion of the lens, either the distance or near portion, it would affect the other one, and there was no way around it. With this new technology, we can increase the near portion without affecting anything else. More than that, we're getting rid of the swim and sway towards the outside edges that people really hate."

The iD MyStyle® 3 leverages two key advancements to enhance visual comfort.

The first is AdaptEase™ Technology, which reduces peripheral astigmatic distortion and smooths transitions between near, intermediate, and far vision zones. This makes it easier for wearers to adapt to the lenses and provides a more comfortable experience.

The second is 3D Binocular Vision™, a solution for patients with differences in prescription strength between their eyes—a common challenge for 73% of presbyopes.

This technology minimizes peripheral prismatic effects, stabilizes vision and ensures a more natural experience for wearers.

"One way to explain progressive lenses is to compare them to a sandbox," says Deforest. "In the past, we had distinct clearings for distance, intermediate and near vision, but the sand—the areas of distortion—would pile up at the edges of these zones. With the iD MyStyle® 3, we've levelled out those piles, softened the edges and made the zones bigger and more usable for patients. While the distortion hasn't disappeared entirely, it's been reduced significantly, making it much easier for wearers to adapt and use the lenses comfortably."

HOYA has introduced five distinct designs to better align lenses with patients' specific needs: Tyro, Modern, Detail, Adventure, and Expert. Each option caters to a different lifestyle and simplifies the selection process for ECPs.

"Tyro is great for starting because it has a soft design that allows people to slowly graduate into wearing a progressive," says Deforest. "A lot of people either go from single vision straight to progressive, which can be very hard to adapt to or from absolutely nothing to wearing a progressive, which is even harder. If we can mitigate some of those challenges, we can make the process much easier for them."

Other designs address a wide range of patient needs. Modern is ideal for multitaskers who frequently shift focus between near, intermediate, and far distances. Detail prioritizes clarity for indoor activities and close work, making it perfect for those who spend significant time at a desk or working

on screens. Adventure emphasizes far-distance acuity, catering to outdoor enthusiasts and those who spend more time outside. Expert is designed for seasoned progressive lens wearers seeking advanced performance and stability.

"Some people go straight to our mid-design, Modern, and they're perfectly happy," adds Deforest. "First-time progressive wearers might start with Tyro and work their way into wearing other versions of the lens."

The MyStyle iDentifier questionnaire streamlines the customization process for both patients and ECPs. By analyzing the patient's prescription and lifestyle, this tool helps practitioners recommend the best design quickly and efficiently.

The iD MyStyle® 3 offers ECPs a practical way to address frequent complaints associated with progressive lenses. The innovative design minimizes peripheral distortion, smooths transitions between visual zones and reduces the swim-and-sway effect, creating a better overall experience for patients. Additionally, the lens is compatible with HOYA's coatings, including anti-reflective and photochromic options.

"We know what patients need," says Deforest. "We've heard the call for larger fields of view and softer distortion zones, and we're going to give it to them." **OP**

A DESIGN FOR EVERY PATIENT

TYRO: Soft design for first-time wearers.

MODERN: For multitaskers switching between near and far focus.

DETAIL: Clarity for indoor activities and close work.

ADVENTURE: Optimized for outdoor enthusiasts.

EXPERT: Advanced performance for seasoned progressive lens users.

iD MyStyle® 3

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Designed for clarity at any distance featuring AdaptEase™ and 3D Binocular Vision™ Technology.



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From Reception to Vision

Dr. Stephanie Kwan reflects on her journey from reception to clinic owner.



Dr. Stephanie Kwan's path into optometry all started when she had a part-time job on reception in a local optometry clinic. Coincidentally, her great-aunt and great-uncle were regular patients and she thought, 'how great would it be to be the one examining their eyes?'

Not long after, Dr. Kwan took the steps to pursue a career in optometry, graduating from the Illinois College of Optometry in Chicago in 2015. Fast-forward to today, she's the optometry partner and independent clinic owner at Specsavers CF Lime Ridge in Hamilton, Ontario.



Q: Since opening Specsavers CF Lime Ridge, how would you describe how business is going?

The first few weeks happened so fast. It felt like starting a new job with feelings of nervousness, excitement, joy and adrenaline – but multiplied. I was thrilled at how fast the schedules were being booked up and how many patients wanted to give us a try. Soon, marketing was kicking in and the word of mouth was spreading. It's been a fantastic journey so far.

Q: What are you hearing from patients and customers?

We've had some incredibly meaningful interactions with our patients. One had come in with her daughter and was looking for help with her sight to do her hobbies, like crosswords. She had already experienced some vision loss due to age-related macular degeneration. I gave her high plus readers to help her do what she enjoyed most, and she grabbed my hand in thanks and told me how much I changed her life.

Q: Was there anything about partnering with Specsavers to become a business owner that you didn't expect?

What surprised me was the level of camaraderie amongst all the retail and optometry partners and the support teams. Everyone is here to help, and there is always someone to turn to. I am seeing this first-hand given my position on the Optometry Steering Group committee, where we collaborate as a network of independent doctors. Specsavers has been actively listening to support the direction we want to take with the eye care we provide.

Q: You've said you previously didn't see yourself as a business owner. What changed?

I was initially inspired by a coworker of mine who introduced me to Specsavers and shared more about the partnership model and the support available. I was motivated by their unique offering — particularly access to advanced clinical equipment, such as OCT, for all patients. I didn't think much about ownership before that, but my coworker gave me the little push I needed.

Before, I was most concerned about not having help or guidance when opening my own business. That thought alone was quite daunting, and learning about the business side while trying to give quality care to my patients at the same time seemed overwhelming. Specsavers makes it easy to do both seamlessly, and I know there will always be help and support when I need it. **OP**



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Eyecare *Evolution*

Optometrists Expand Scope of Practice For Eyesthetics Revenue Stream

BY EVRA TAYLOR

In the marketing world, the concept of line extensions isn't new, but the increasingly popular phenomenon of combining optical services with medico-aesthetic treatments is providing patients a one-stop shop experience with a new measure of convenience and care. This merger represents a fruitful new revenue stream designed to serve the expanding needs of optometrists' current client base and to attract new clients as well.

In recent years the lines between medical and aesthetic services have blurred to meet the needs of consumers who are increasingly concerned with maintaining their looks through anti-aging treatments in the course of consulting with ECPs about various types of ocular procedures.

The term "eyesthetics" has been coined as a way of describing this synthesis and symbiosis of services tailored to the needs and desires of patients seeking a more holistic, integrated approach to their eye health. As eye care practitioners seek to find novel, expanded ways to serve their clients, certain corollaries have been identified. One of these is the treatment of dry eye disease whose incidence is rising exponentially and which is now treated by some optometrists.

Several experts in the field have remarked that some aesthetic benefits may arise secondarily to the primary purpose of the treatments offered. Dr. Timonhy Tsang is an optometrist at Foresee Eyecare, a

full-scope optometry practice with an eyewear gallery and sub-specialty in a broad range of eye care services encompassing contact/specialty lenses, dry eye management and treatment, myopia control, ocular disease management, and refractive surgery co-management.

Dr. Tsang noted that current dry eye treatment actually grew out of a cosmetic application. Intense pulse light (IPL) and radio frequency (RF) technologies have been used in dermatology and aesthetics for decades. IPL is used to enhance the eye area by stimulating collagen production, reducing the appearance of fine lines and dark circles, and treating sun damage. The customization of these technologies for eye care is a natural extension of their benefits.

"We started offering more dry eye treatment options after renovating our practice in 2021," Dr. Tsang explained. "Historically, there have always been many ways to manage dry eyes including artificial tears, nutrition supplements and warm compresses. However, the introduction and evolution of IPL/RF therapies and devices to heat and express the Meibomian glands that contribute to dry eye disease have improved our ability to treat this condition."

According to Dr. Tsang, dry eye treatment has been one of the largest growth contributors in his practice due to the growing need, along with advancements in knowledge and available technologies. "Dispensing a patient's customized

eyeglasses or contacts as well as in-office dry eye treatments are always well-received services because patients can feel the immediate benefits," he noted.

Dr. Kerry Salsberg is an OD and the owner of Eyes on Sheppard. He worked with his father, Dr. Stan Salsberg, the clinic's founder, for 25 years. In addition to standard optometry, they evolved to encompass aesthetic treatments as well as dry eye treatments using equipment purposed for aesthetic treatments. Roughly eight years ago, Eyes on Sheppard began increasing their dry eye treatment, realizing within a couple of years that it was a gateway to aesthetics with the use of their multi-purpose instruments. "Often, when patients were receiving treatment for their dry eyes there was an opportunity to discuss other eye-related and body treatments they were seeking," Dr. Salsberg noted.

In addition to IPL and RF treatments, Eyes on Sheppard offers microneedling,





treatment practices and business-related subjects such as the economics of dry eye, techniques for communicating effectively with patients, and how to integrate some of these optometry-adjunct services. “There is an untapped market for this integration of services. Patients may be reluctant to disclose certain concerns. We provide them a form for them to fill out to maximize their visit so that they can talk about such concerns as fine lines and wrinkles that bother them.” This allows permission-based marketing that can lead to an expanded conversation about patients’ more sensitive aesthetic concerns.

“Canada has a population that is aging in number but not in terms of lifestyle. Canadians are still young at heart, and want to look good and see well. We introduce these synergistic concepts and procedures on our waiting room screens, for example, and review them with patients, sometimes offering a complimentary aesthetic consul-

tion, in addition to eyewear. Tanya Miller, the company’s business development manager, noted that often patients may not even be aware of additional needs or opportunities to enhance their well-being. “For example, someone might come in specifically for a Fotona 4D treatment — a non-surgical facelift — only to discover during the consultation that they have mild or moderate dry eye, a condition they might not have recognized.”

Miller explained that “patients who initially seek us out for eye care may find themselves drawn to our cosmetic services after learning about the range of rejuvenation treatments we offer. This natural overlap in services highlights the holistic nature of our practice, where functional eye care and cosmetic enhancements come together seamlessly to provide a full spectrum of care tailored to each individual. The split between the two services can vary, but it’s clear that patients appreciate the opportunity to address both their health and aesthetic goals in one trusted location.

“This combination resonates deeply because it aligns with a holistic approach to wellness: feeling good on the inside and reflecting it outwardly. People are drawn to the idea that their care doesn’t have to be compartmentalized; instead, they can enhance both their functional and aesthetic needs in a comprehensive practice,” she continued.

“By offering both, we’re not just treating, we’re transforming. Patients see the value in an experience that ensures their vision is protected by specialists and their appearance is rejuvenated by professionals—bringing together science, health and beauty in a way that feels natural and deeply personal. It’s a reflection of a larger trend: people want comprehensive care that values both their health and how they feel about themselves. The synergy isn’t just logical—it’s life-changing,” Miller concluded.

Diversification by ECPs provides new revenue opportunities and elevates patient care for a growing cadre of consumers seeking not only longer life, but enhanced quality of life as well. **OP**

The term “eyesthetics” has been coined as a way of describing this synthesis and symbiosis of services tailored to the needs and desires of patients seeking a more holistic, integrated approach to their eye health.

Jett Plasma – the only direct-current plasma device for dry eye therapy and aesthetics including non-surgical blepharoplasty. Their current practice has a diverse demographic from children to the elderly, with a services ratio of 80% optometry and 20% dry eye treatment and aesthetics, with aspirations to increase the latter to 30%. Each of their seven physicians has a niche specialty and cross-referrals occur within the practice. The synergy exists, for example, in cases where Botox injections result in dry eye.

Salsberg markets his dry eye practice segment heavily through lecture series on

tation. We also engage in extensive social media marketing and mailouts to increase awareness,” Dr. Salsberg added. “With the Sephora and TikTok crazes, consumers are being exposed to these services and there is a desire and demand for people to look, feel and see their best. Looking youthful is super-important. As optometrists, we’re the gateway for everything related to the eyes and we should be able to discuss eye-specific treatments,” he said.

U Vision Group offers services including laser cosmetic procedures, vision correction surgery, specialty contact lens fitting, and medical/cosmetic surgeries such as blepharoplasty and NightLase, a non-invasive laser treatment for snoring cessa-

Financial Clarity Ahead

Financial Insights for Eye Care Professionals

BY TIM PAZIUK



Have you ever reflected on how much you were taught in school about practice management? My name is Tim Paziuk. I have been working in the financial services industry for over 45 years, with a focus on helping professionals understand and manage their finances. In 2003, I wrote the first book in Canada that dealt exclusively with the incorporation of professionals. I wrote it because I realized that most professionals decide to incorporate at some point in their careers. The problem I recognized was that most had little or no training in running a business.

Most of you are incorporated or will be. Many of you will own your own business. The question I'd like you to consider is: how much do you really know about running a business? Do you feel confident enough to say that everyone on your team is always doing the very best job for you?

Think about a large corporation. It has in-house lawyers, accountants, bookkeepers, human resources, payroll, risk management departments, marketing, and credit departments. All these

people work together, sharing the same vision to maximize its success.

Now consider your setup as a small business. You probably have an outside accountant, a bookkeeper, a lawyer, a bank (maybe a banker), an insurance advisor, an investment advisor, perhaps a payroll company and an office manager. Great! But how often do all these people communicate with one another about you and your business?

I often see professionals meeting with their accountants or bankers and then having to decide what information, if any, needs to be passed on to the rest of their team. If you meet with your insurance advisor, do you pass the information on to your accountant or investment advisor? Should you?

The point is that, as a professional, you work hard to earn the money you do. Most professionals rely on others to help with banking, insurance, investments, accounting, and legal matters. Most believe that the team of other professionals they surround themselves with is acting in their best interests. But what if they're not? The potential risks of not having a unified financial

service team could include missed opportunities, conflicting advice, or even financial loss.

If you think about it, bankers, insurance agents, and investment advisors are all in the sales business. I mention this because it's important for you to understand where they're coming from. I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with that. The problem I have seen too often in my 45 years in the financial services industry is that salespeople sometimes don't give you the whole picture.

Over the next year, I'm going to take you inside the financial services industry so you can get a clearer picture of how it works and the people who work in it.

I believe that once you see what's on the inside, you have a better chance to make more informed decisions that will not only enhance your personal wealth but also give you a sense of control and empowerment over your financial future.

If you're one of the lucky few who have a team working in unison to help you succeed, congratulations! For most of you, I'd like to offer you an opportunity to see where you can help yourself get ahead.

To start, I'm taking you into the banking industry to show you how to navigate the system and what questions to ask to get maximum value from your bank. In future editions, we'll explore investment firms, insurance companies, and the accounting and legal professions. We'll also take a side trip to look at subjects like compensation, employee contracts, taxation, and estate planning. This knowledge will give you a significant advantage in managing your business and personal finances.

If you're interested in taking this journey with me, I also encourage you to ask any questions you may have about any of the financial services industries I've mentioned. I would be pleased to share my experiences with you so we can all learn and thrive both personally and professionally. **OP**

Tim Paziuk has been in the financial services industry for over 45 years. He is the author of two books on the Incorporation of professionals and has been featured in the Financial Post, Huffington Post, MoneySense magazine, and numerous other publications. He is currently the Chairman of TPC Financial Group Limited, a fee-for-service financial planning firm specializing in professionals.

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Managing an optical store requires a blend of excellent customer service and efficient business practices.

To increase sales, attract more customers, and boost the overall efficiency of your store, you can implement a variety of strategies. There are many practical solutions to help you achieve these goals.

Offer Personalized Service

Personalized service is a powerful way to stand out in the optical industry. Train your staff to provide tailored advice and recommendations based on each customer's specific needs, whether it's for eyewear, contact lenses, or vision care. When customers feel heard and understood, they are more likely to return for future purchases and refer your store to others. This approach fosters trust, loyalty, and increased sales.

Showcase a Variety of Products - Diversify your product offerings to appeal to a wide range of customers. Ensure that you offer a variety of frame styles, lens options, contact lenses, and accessories across different price points. Having a broad selection helps meet the preferences of different customer demographics and boosts your chances of making a sale.

Utilize Social Media for Promotion

Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are essential tools for boosting your store's visibility and engaging with customers. Post regularly about promotions, new arrivals, customer success stories, and helpful eye care tips. Social media helps maintain customer engagement while also attracting new clientele. Consider running paid advertisements to target specific demographics or geographic areas that match your ideal customer base.

Organize Special Events

Hosting special events are a great way to engage your community and create excitement around your products. Consider events like frame tasting nights, eye health seminars, or customer appreciation days. These events not only create a fun and educational atmosphere but also give customers the chance to connect with your staff, ask questions, and explore new products. These experiences can drive customer loyalty and increase sales conversions.

Focus on Education

Educating your customers is an excellent way to build trust and increase long-term loyalty. Provide informative brochures, host workshops, or create educational video content about eye health, eyewear care, and the bene-

fits of various lens options. When customers understand the value of high-quality products and services, they are more likely to make informed purchasing decisions and appreciate your expertise, leading to repeat business.

Staff Training

Training your staff efficiently is crucial for reducing downtime and enhancing store operations. Multi-tasking and cross-functional training can help your staff handle various roles, improve efficiency, and reduce operational costs. Well-trained employees are more adept at managing customer inquiries, upselling products, and closing sales. A knowledgeable and confident team ensures better customer service.

Leverage Partnerships for Collaborative Marketing

Forming partnerships with local businesses or organizations can help expand your reach and attract new customers. Collaborative marketing allows you to tap into new customer bases through joint promotions, events, or loyalty programs. These partnerships can be a mutually beneficial way to share costs and boost exposure.

Utilize a Consolidated Billing Service

A consolidated billing service is a smart move for managing multiple invoices from vendors. By combining these invoices into one, you can streamline cash flow management, protect your credit standing, and improve profitability. This efficiency tool saves time and resources, allowing you to focus more on customer service and growing your business.

Join a Group like The Optical Group

Consider joining a network like The Optical Group, which can offer several advantages, including access to better pricing, a broader product range, marketing support, and educational resources. By leveraging the collective buying power and resources of a group, you can streamline your operations, reduce costs, and enhance your customer service. Additionally, this partnership can boost profitability and help your optical store compete in a challenging market. **OP**



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Vision for ALL

Empowering the workplace through inclusive vision practices

BY ROBERT DALTON, OAC

One of the most rewarding aspects of being an optician is witnessing how healthy and inclusive vision practices can transform lives. It's not just about improving eyesight; it's about fostering environments where everyone, regardless of visual ability, can thrive. An inspiring example comes from a visit to Walmart, where a cheerful, visually impaired teenager showcased the power of accessibility features and inclusive work practices.

While individuals must adapt to their visual challenges, the responsibility for inclusivity does not rest solely on their shoulders.

This employee, who could only read text when it was less than an inch from his eye, demonstrated how technology bridges gaps in the workplace. Using a handheld device similar to a smartphone, he employed a zoom feature that enlarged text to one word per page, allowing him

to assist customers efficiently. What struck me most was the simplicity of this solution and its profound impact on his confidence, productivity, and ability to perform his job independently.

This story underscores an essential truth: while individu-

als must adapt to their visual challenges, the responsibility for inclusivity does not rest solely on their shoulders.

Employers, colleagues, and society play pivotal roles in creating accessible environments. Let's explore the transformative potential of inclusive vision practices and how opticians can champion them in workplaces worldwide.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ACCESSIBILITY IN EMPLOYMENT

According to the World Health Organization, over 2.2 billion people worldwide experience vision impairment or blindness. Despite this, many visually impaired individuals face barriers to employment, including outdated perceptions of their capabilities and a lack of accessible tools. This reality highlights a pressing need for opticians and other vision care professionals to advocate for inclusivity.

Accessibility in employment extends beyond providing corrective eyewear. It involves implementing technologies,

workplace accommodations, and training programs that enable individuals with visual impairments to succeed. As opticians, we are uniquely positioned to educate employers and employees about the tools and practices that make workplaces more inclusive.

PRACTICAL STEPS FOR INCLUSIVE VISION PRACTICES

1 Leverage Technology for Accessibility

The Walmart example highlights how technology can empower visually impaired employees. Modern low-vision tools such as screen readers, magnification software, and voice-to-text applications transform how individuals interact with their work environments. These tools are especially beneficial for roles requiring digital interaction, such as inventory management or customer service.

Opticians play a key role by:

Recommending appropriate assistive devices, such as handheld magnifiers or specialized lenses.

- **Partnering** with employers to identify accessible technologies that align with job requirements.

- **Educating clients** about the availability of apps like Seeing AI, which reads text aloud, or Be My Eyes, which connects visually impaired individuals with sighted volunteers for assistance.

2 Designing Inclusive Workspaces

Inclusivity begins with thoughtful workspace design. For employees with visual impairments, this might include:

- **Clear signage** with large, high-contrast text.

- **Consistent lighting** to reduce glare and improve visibility.

- **Organized layouts** that minimize hazards and make navigation intuitive.

Opticians can collaborate with workplace planners to advise on lighting and spatial arrangements that enhance visibility and comfort for employees with varying degrees of vision.

3 Promoting Education and Awareness

Education is key to breaking down misconceptions about visual impairments. Employers and coworkers must understand that visual challenges do not equate to reduced capability.

As advocates, opticians can:

- **Provide workshops** on understanding visual impairments.

- **Teach coworkers** how to use accessible tools effectively.

- **Encourage empathy** by sharing success stories of visually impaired individuals in the workforce.

4 Advocating for Policy Changes

Beyond individual workplaces, opticians can influence broader change by advocating for policies that prioritize accessibility. This might involve:

- **Encouraging** employers to adopt inclusive hiring practices.

- **Supporting** government initiatives to subsidize assistive technologies.

- **Partnering** with organizations that promote workplace accessibility.

OPTICIANS AS CHAMPIONS OF INCLUSION

Opticians have a unique opportunity to lead the charge

in promoting inclusive vision practices. By combining clinical expertise with advocacy, we can:

- **Inspire confidence** in visually impaired individuals, showing them that their potential is limitless.

- **Serve as liaisons** between employers and employees, facilitating the implementation of accessible solutions.

- **Raise awareness** about the importance of inclusivity in vision care and beyond.

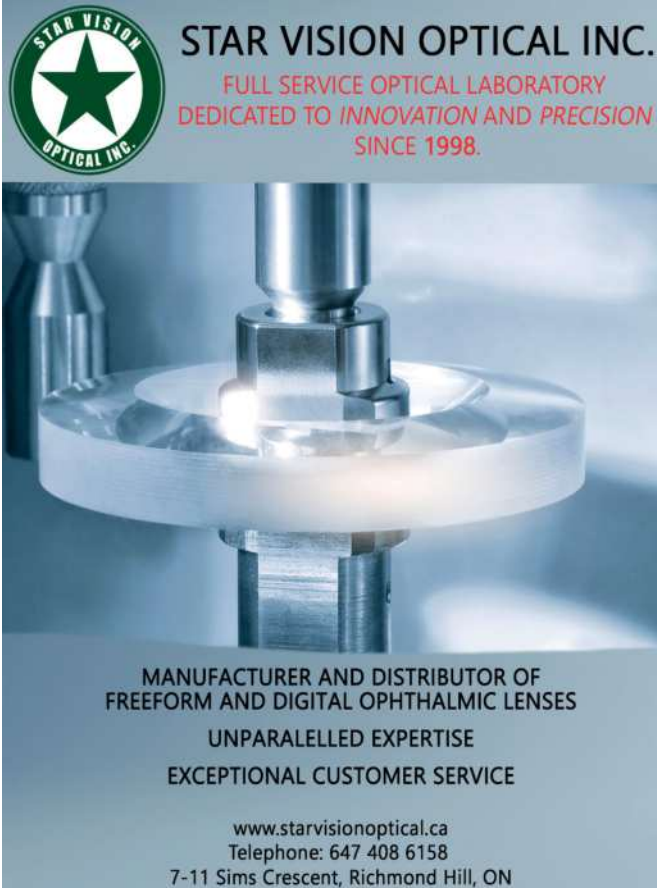
and resilience. Such moments remind us that creating accessible environments is a shared responsibility.

As opticians, we must embrace our roles as advocates, educators, and innovators. By championing inclusive vision practices, we can help dismantle barriers and pave the way for a more equitable and empowering world. Let's strive to make healthy and inclusive vision practices the norm, one workplace at a time. **OP**

A CALL TO ACTION

The story of the Walmart employee is a testament to the power of inclusivity. A simple zoom feature on a handheld device not only enhanced his productivity but also showcased his capability

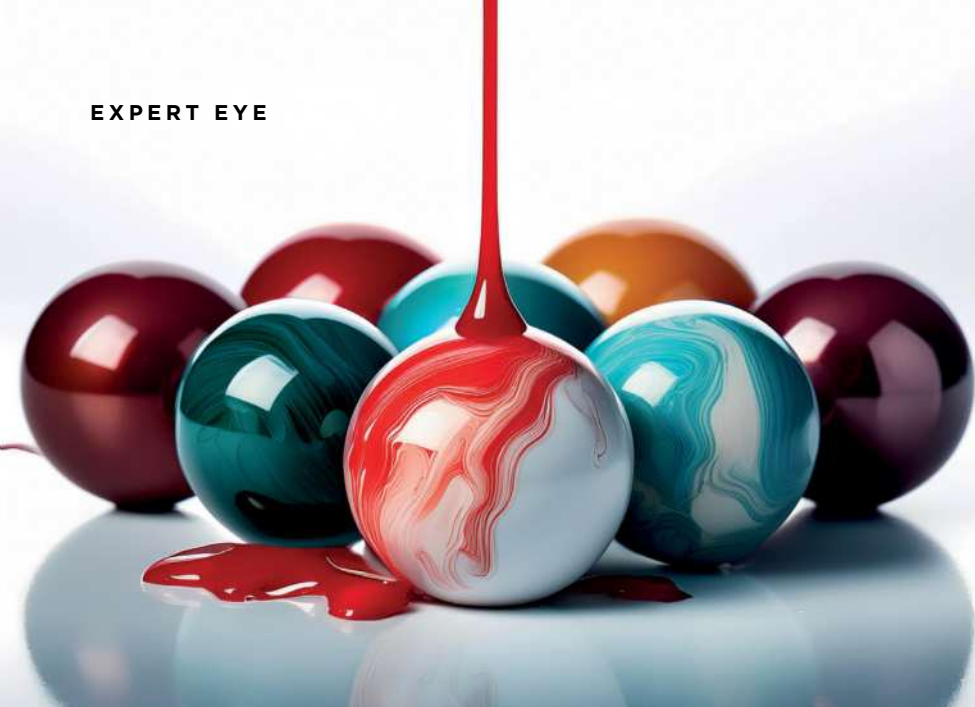
Robert Dalton is the executive director of the Opticians Association of Canada, whose mission is to promote licensed opticians and the profession, maintain professional standards, and educate and inform consumers about eye health. For more information, visit opticians.ca.



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Ask An Expert

Insightful advice and practical tips for navigating today's optometry challenges.

BY DR. ROB KLOEPFER

Dr. Rob, what is a recent case you have encountered that surprised you?

It's a common question we hear from patients, students, or friends: "What's the most surprising case you've seen?" A recent experience certainly fits the bill. A 70-year-old woman came into the clinic with a very red eye, blurred vision, and a strange pressure sensation when she moved her right eye. Her family doctor had noticed a "horizontal line" in her eye and referred her to an ophthalmologist. Instead of waiting, she came to us first.

Her vision was still reasonably good—20/30 with correction—but her intraocular pressure (IOP) was off the charts at 48 mmHg. While she didn't have a history of recent trauma, eye disease, or concerning medical conditions, the symptoms were clearly serious.

When I examined her eye under a slit lamp, I quickly spotted the problem: she had a hyphema, essentially blood pooling in the front chamber of her eye. The blood had clotted around the edge of her pupil, with more pooled inferiorly. What really grabbed my attention, though, was a steady stream of blood trickling from the 11 o'clock position behind her pupil—it was like watching a leaky faucet.

I'd seen hyphemas before, but this active bleeding was unusual. I couldn't even get a clear look at the back of her eye because of it.

I'd seen hyphemas before, but this active bleeding was unusual. I couldn't even get a clear look at the back of her eye because of it. With no inflammatory cells present and a mild cataract forming, nothing else seemed obviously wrong.

At first, I thought she might have Uveitis-Glaucoma-Hyphema (UGH) syndrome, which can happen when the eye's inner structures are irritated by something like a lens implant. However, she hadn't undergone any recent surgery, and the presence of a cataract made me rethink that diagnosis. The pieces weren't fitting together.

Given her condition's severity, I didn't waste any time. I referred her to the on-call ophthalmologist, sharing slit lamp photos and videos to expedite care. They confirmed the hyphema but couldn't identify a cause. A vascular malformation irritated by the cataract was suspected, and gonioscopy ruled out new blood vessel growth or neovascularization.

To control her IOP, she was prescribed oral Diamox and a combination of eye drops. By the next morning, her IOP was normal, and the bleeding stopped. A B-scan ultrasound ruled out hidden growths or lesions.

She began steroid drops (Pred Forte) and was advised to avoid activities that might spike her eye pressure, like bending over or heavy lifting. Follow-ups with a local ophthalmologist were scheduled.

This case highlights the critical role optometrists play in eye care. Collaboration with medical professionals is key, and keeping family doctors informed ensures continuity of care.

While many "red eye" cases are minor, digging deeper when something feels

off is vital. Optometrists are uniquely positioned to manage emergencies and coordinate care.

If anyone out there has encountered a similar hyphema case, especially with active bleeding, I'd love to hear about it. Even now, I find myself replaying the slit lamp video, amazed by what I saw during the exam. **OP**

Dr. Rob Kloepfer, an optometrist and educator, holds a Doctor of Optometry degree and an MBA. He founded HealthE Academy to improve patient care and support eyecare teams. A seasoned lecturer, Dr. Kloepfer has taught across Canada and served seven years on the Alberta College of Optometrists Council, including as President.



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Visionary Canada

On the road to a National Strategy for Eye Care

BY DR. MARTIN SPIRO, CAO President

Ensuring eye health for all Canadians calls for a comprehensive approach, making eye health, vision care, and rehabilitation essential components of Canada's public health agenda. Canada is long overdue for a national strategy on eye care. This is not merely a question of policy—it's a matter of urgency. With Canada's rapidly aging population and a myopia epidemic among school-aged children, there is an urgent need to bring together the provincial, territories, and federal governments and all vision care partners to understand the risks to eye health and to foster the available preventative measures and treatment options.

The passage of Bill C-284 "An Act to establish a national strategy for eye care" in November 2024, introduced in June 2022 by the Honourable Judy Sgro, Member of Parliament

for Humber River – Black Creek, is a milestone to elevate standards on multiple fronts. It also designates the month of February as "Age-Related Macular Degeneration Awareness Month." The passage of Bill C-284 represents a pivotal advancement, aligning with our enduring commitment to establishing eye care as a national health priority and promoting regular, proactive care across the country. As primary care providers for vision care and eye health, we are positioned to foster a productive discussion with a broad spectrum of vision partners to share our resources and expertise to make this strategy a success.

The Bill is kept purposely high-level. One of the key goals of this Bill is to identify and address the training and education of those who can play a role in eye health. This includes not only healthcare practitioners but also educators, early childhood specialists,

caregivers and others who interact with the public. By equipping these groups with knowledge about the importance of comprehensive eye exams and the role of vision care professionals, we can ensure that they are better prepared to recognize early warning signs and refer individuals to appropriate care.

We also recognize the critical need for research and data collection in vision care. For example, the federal government is responsible for the healthcare of Indigenous peoples, refugees, and veterans. These populations face severe barriers, amplified by insufficient research and poor coordination in knowledge exchange when it comes to vision care. Closing these gaps is essential.

We also see an opportunity to improve information and knowledge sharing between federal, provincial and territorial governments. For instance, identifying shortages of vision care providers in rural and remote areas across provinces and territories, and incentives for health professionals to work in rural areas.

Another key aspect of this Bill is accelerating the approval of medical devices and drugs. We must find ways to reduce barriers and costs for introducing new devices and treatments in Canada, all while ensuring patient safety.

Finally, enhanced public education is crucial. As 65% of Canadians express concern for their eye health, our 2024 survey underlined how little people know about it and the major eye diseases that increase the risk of blindness without proper intervention. We all have been actively promoting the importance of comprehensive eye exams. Federal support from the Public Health Agency of Canada would significantly amplify these efforts.

The heavy lifting occurs now with Canadian vision partners engaging in multiple-level discussions.

Stay tuned! **OP**

Dr. Martin Spiro is president of the Canadian Association of Optometrists (CAO). The CAO is the national voice of optometry, providing leadership and support to more than 8,300 members (optometrists, students and optometric assistants) to enhance the delivery of healthy eyes and clear vision for all Canadians.

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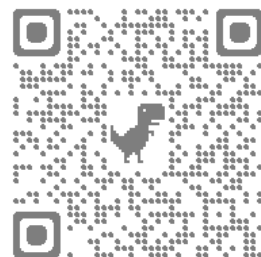
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Lead with Clarity

If the Leaders don't know what the business goals or focus is, how will they ever achieve it?

BY NANCY DEWALD



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ALIGNING YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM AT THE START OF THE YEAR

As the calendar flips to a new year, aligning your leadership team becomes crucial for setting the tone and direction for the months ahead. Successful alignment ensures that everyone is moving towards common goals, fostering a cohesive and productive environment, and promoting open and effective communication. Here are the key steps to achieve this alignment:

1 Reflect on the Past Year

Start by reflecting on the past year's achievements and challenges. Ask the following questions what worked, what didn't, and what can be improved. Encourage open dialogue where team members can share their insights and learnings.

2 Establish Clear Goals and Objectives

Setting clear, achievable goals is essential for alignment. Collaborate with your leadership team to define both short-term and long-term objectives. Ensure these goals are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). Having a shared vision helps in keeping everyone focused and motivated. To avoid overwhelm, limit the number of goals.

3 Communicate Vision and Strategy

Once the goals are set, communicate the vision and strategy clearly across the organization. Use various platforms such as meetings, emails, and internal newsletters to ensure that the message reaches everyone. The best way to share information with a team is through the Leadership team. Provide clarity and get buy-in from all team members.

4 Define Roles and Responsibilities

To avoid confusion and overlap, clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each leadership team member. Ensure that everyone understands their specific tasks and how they contribute to the overall goals. This clarity helps in maximizing efficiency and accountability within the team.

5 Foster a Culture of Collaboration and Trust

A collaborative and trusting environment is the backbone of a well-aligned leadership team. Encourage open communication, where team members feel comfortable sharing their ideas and concerns. Build trust by being transparent, dependable, and supportive. Ongoing development can strengthen bonds and improve collaboration. Consider programs such as DiSC

or Working Genius, the more we understand our teams' tendencies and preferences the easier it is to work together.

6 Monitor Progress and Provide Feedback

Regularly monitor the progress towards the set goals. Use key performance indicators (KPIs) to track achievements and identify areas that need attention. Provide constructive feedback and recognize the contributions of team members. This continuous monitoring and feedback loop ensures that everyone stays on track and motivated.

CONCLUSION

The business landscape is constantly changing, and flexibility is key to staying aligned. Be open to adapting your strategies based on new information or changes in the market. Encourage your leadership team to remain agile and ready to pivot when necessary.

The effort you put towards gaining alignment will pay dividends all year. **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.ca.

Tok the Talk

Engaging Millennial Patients through TikTok Content

BY HEATHER HOBMA



Photo: background photo - stock.adobe.com

Millennials, born between 1981 and 1996, grew up in a digital world that profoundly shaped their values. This generation experienced Tamagotchi, the Oregon Trail, the rise of the Internet, and the 2008 financial crisis. These formative experiences have conditioned Millennials to prioritize authenticity, social responsibility, and technology. Now, well into adulthood, Millennials have surpassed baby boomers as the dominant generation, reshaping industries such as retail, entertainment, and healthcare.

WHAT MAKES TIKTOK SO APPEALING?

TikTok has gained significant traction among Millennials, with 24% reporting weekly use in early 2024. The platform's appeal stems from:

Short-form videos: Quick, engaging content that captures attention.

Community and creativity: A space for self-expression and creativity.

Entertainment: A hub for funny, relatable content that resonates.

Accessibility: Easy-to-use features that make it accessible to a wide audience.

Virality: Rapidly spreading trends and memes to a massive audience.

Personalization: Content tailored to individual preferences, keeping users engaged.

MILLENNIAL VALUES & INTERESTS

Millennials are tech-savvy and value-driven, influenced by globalization and a challenging economic backdrop. To engage them, brands must connect with their core values:

Authenticity: Transparent, honest brands are preferred. Millennials are wary of inauthentic or overly promotional content.

Social responsibility: They support ethical, sustainable brands with a positive impact.

Convenience: Millennials value easy access and seamless experiences.

Experiences: They prioritize unique and memorable experiences over material possessions.

Personalization: Brands should tailor offerings to meet individual preferences.

Technology: As digital natives, Millennials expect a strong online presence and seamless digital experiences.

Humor: They enjoy clever, witty marketing that entertains.

Community: They prefer supporting brands that give back and have a social impact.

Diversity & Inclusion: Millennials advocate for diversity and expect brands to reflect these values in practices and advertising.

EYE CARE TIKTOK CONTENT IDEAS

To engage Millennial audiences, eye care professionals can create TikTok content such as:

Behind-the-scenes: Show daily operations and staff interactions to humanize your brand and build trust.

Educational videos: Share insights on eye conditions, vision correction, or eye health tips to establish expertise.

Product demonstrations: Showcase products or services creatively to generate interest.

Challenges & duets: Participate in popular trends or create your own challenges to engage viewers and showcase your brand's personality.

Live Q&A sessions: Engage directly with your audience and establish yourself as a trusted source, as 64% of Gen Z and 49% of Millennials use TikTok as a search engine.

BUILD TRUST FOR YOUR BRAND

TikTok offers an excellent opportunity to connect with Millennials. To build trust, create engaging and authentic content that aligns with their values. This will help build brand awareness, attract patients, and enhance your practice's reputation. If you're not already using TikTok, now is the time to start. **OP**

Heather Hobma is an elder Millennial and senior editor at Marketing4ECPS with over ten years of writing and editing experience. She has a background in marketing, cultural heritage, and English literature and a passion for the Oxford comma and open-access publications. In her spare time, Heather enjoys racing cars on the Rainbow Road with her young son and exploring the mountains with family. Heather can be reached at marketing4ecps.com.

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CAPRICORN



DECEMBER 22 - JANUARY 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 are known for their ambitious, disciplined, and grounded nature. Driven by goals, they approach life with practicality and a strong sense of responsibility, often seen as the rock among their friends and family. Capricorns value tradition and quality, and this is reflected in their style. Their fashion sense leans toward timeless classics, structured silhouettes, and tailored looks, opting for muted, earthy tones that project a sense of quiet confidence and professionalism. They prefer quality over quantity, often investing in well-made, versatile pieces that stand the test of time. Capricorns carry an understated elegance, blending sophistication with functionality. Celebrities like Kate Middleton, Michelle Obama, and Bradley Cooper exemplify this Capricorn essence—reserved yet refined, effortlessly stylish, and always polished. Capricorns shine in their steady, dependable demeanor, making them natural leaders and trusted figures in any group. **OP**

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