

OPTICAL PRISM

JUNE 2024 • VOL. 42 • NO. 6

Behind *the* Designs

How frame styles come to life

BREAK-THROUGH!

Contact lens innovations

RAY READY

Preparing patients for summer

TURNING FROWNS UPSIDE DOWN

From complaint to opportunity

Embracing Differences

Working with neurodivergent clients

BEYOND BINARY

Styling sessions that transcend gender

Breaking BARRIERS

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AYA OPTICAL
Celebrating Indigenous Art

June 2024



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It struck me as I was editing this issue that opticians and optometrists may be in the eyewear and eye care business, but they're really in the people business. That may sound clichéd, but it's a big departure from earlier times when many ECPs took a clinical, one-size-fits-all approach to dealing with patients.

These days, ECPs know that how they treat patients — from making them feel welcome to providing a wide range of eyewear options and dealing with complaints — can make the difference between losing a customer and gaining a loyal patient who will refer you to friends and family.

This issue celebrates Pride Month with lots of gender-neutral frames and fashion-forward eyewear. In addition, eyewear image expert Wendy Buchanan's Spec Style article provides tips on how to transcend gender boundaries in styling your clients, to embrace all aspects of individual identity.

"As eye care professionals, our ability to go beyond initial first impressions and overcome assumptions demonstrates our expertise — and, more importantly, our compassion as human beings," she writes.

And gender isn't the only difference that ECPs need to navigate empathetically — neurodivergence is another human aspect that must be understood and addressed when dealing with patients. I urge you to read Evra Taylor's enlightening Biz Med article about both the physical and sensory needs of neurodivergent patients, including those with Down syndrome and those on the autism spectrum.

"Using declarative language and adjusting gestures, tone of voice and facial expressions, along with lengthening the duration of the appointment, can all help with providing services for special populations," writes Evra.

All patients are people, and they all deserve to be treated with respect and sensitivity.

A customer who has experienced a service failure and has had the issue effectively resolved ends up being more satisfied and loyal than a customer who has never experienced any issues at all.

That said, when dealing with any patient, issues can arise, and it's important not to run for the hills or make matters worse when a patient has a complaint. Nancy Dewald's Eye Opener article outlines how to turn customer complaints into opportunities by not only resolving them, but doing so in a way that exceeds customer expectations.

According to research, "A customer who has experienced a service failure and has had the issue effectively resolved ends up being more satisfied and loyal than a customer who has never experienced any issues at all," Nancy notes.

If there's a throughline in this issue of *Optical Prism*, it's compassion. By treating all patients as human beings with needs, fears, requirements and expectations, ECPs can become a trusted partner in helping them improve their sight and express their individuality. **OP**



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Andy Wolf

Fresh LOOKS

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



STRAK AMSTERDAM

Crafted from a single block of Japanese titanium, the Strak Amsterdam collection's sleek aesthetic is highlighted with chiselled features. The A31 frame features a bevelled, two-tone frame front, available in Light Gold and Black, Blue and Silver, and Rose Gold and Blue.

For more information, contact your Canadian Optical Supply representative or visit: canadianoptical.com

LINDA FARROW

Inspired by brutalist architecture, the new Sadie sunglasses feature a sleek oval eye shape and jewelry-like temple design. Available in Light Gold with Tortoiseshell temples and Brown Solid Zeiss Lenses or Yellow Gold with Black temples and Grey Solid Zeiss Lenses.

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



MAX MARA

MM1541 is an oversized acetate optical frame with a front characterized by the Maxim geometric metal detail, designed to enhance the eyes. The style comes in classic colours and new, modern shades.

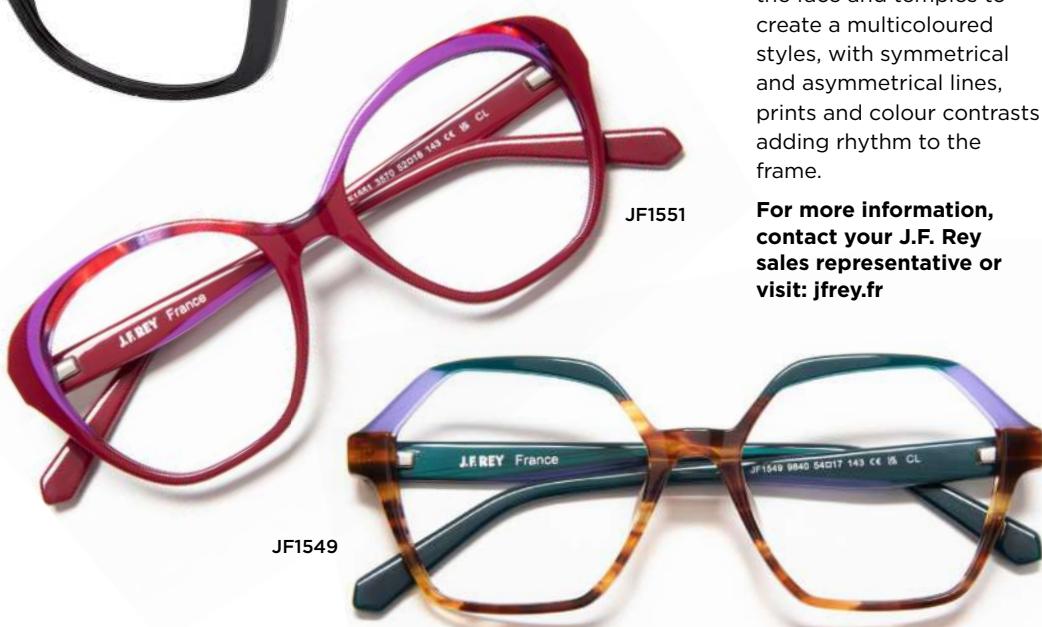
For more information, contact your Marcolin representative or visit: marcolin.com



J.F. REY

The brand's new Graphicolor optical range for women uses several complex laminations of acetates on the face and temples to create a multicoloured styles, with symmetrical and asymmetrical lines, prints and colour contrasts adding rhythm to the frame.

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



FRESH LOOKS



P6000



P7001



P6001



P7000

PURE

This Marchon proprietary brand takes a new direction with its latest mood-boosting optical collection in acetate. A wide range of sizing, styling and colours offers inclusivity for all, with styles featuring custom core wire designs and end piece detailing, complemented by rounded temple tips.

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



OGI

Inspired by New York Fashion Week, OGI Eyewear has styles to fit Pantone's latest fashion colour trends. The colour chart's Orange-ade colour is reflected in OGI's Crushin' It style in Orange, while Game Changer in Sky Lilac offers a softer pairing of Icy Blue and Lilac.

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





FRESH LOOKS

KLIKK

KLIKK's seven new narrow-fit models include these trendy thick-rim frames in stainless steel and acetate.

Designed with a metal frame and a handmade acetate insert, the squared K-761 merges contemporary fashion and vintage aesthetics. Available in Black Gold, Rosewood Rose Gold, and Crystal Gold. Meanwhile, K-762 exudes confidence with its P3 shape. Offered in striking colourways such as Black Gold, Rose Blush, Ivory Gold, and Crystal, this fashion-forward unisex frame allows wearers to elevate their look and express their personality.

For more information, contact your WestGroupe representative or visit: westgroupe.com



WOODY'S

Known for its cutting-edge styles, Woody's has done it again with Rue, a daring contemporary sunglass model made of Italian acetate, with milled acetate temples, German hinges and CR39 Carl Zeiss lenses.

For more information, contact your Mood Eyewear representative or visit: moodeyewear.com



GUESS

Animal prints become unmistakable patterns on the temples of GUESS's latest models. The GU50118 is a square optical frame that recalls the classic butterfly shape, featuring the iconic GUESS chain reproduced on the temples, highlighted by an elegant metal insert embossed with the GUESS logo.

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



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FRESH LOOKS



DONNA KARAN

The new Modern Icons collection includes DO5012, a retro-inspired aviator with sleek, curved lines and exposed metal core wire through the temples. Available in Black Crystal, Cherrywood Horn, and Forest Horn. Optical style DO5014 is a modern take on a

classic, with a bold, oversized silhouette and thick temples for a stand-out look. Offered in Black Crystal, Cherrywood Crystal, and Olive Crystal.

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

ANDY WOLF

Known for vintage-inspired frames with bold colour combinations, Andy Wolf's 5141 model is a young vintage version of a geometric angled frame with a slight cat-eye. This style comes in a range of two-tone combinations and earthy ombre shades.

For more information, contact your Andy Wolf representative or visit: andy-wolf.com



5141



VONTÉLLE

Actor Kadeem Hardison has partnered with Vontelle Eyewear to create nostalgic flip-up glasses inspired by his famous character Dwayne Wayne from the '90s sitcom *A Different World*. The college student character became a fashion icon with his signature flip-up aviator glasses, leaving a mark on popular culture.

For more information, contact your Vontelle representative or visit: vontelle.com



Calvin Klein

Camila Morrone

Behind *the* Designs



How frame styles come to life

BY DAVID GOLDBERG



In the competitive world of eyewear design, precision and creativity are not just aspirations but necessities. So we decided to delve into the intricate processes behind some of the industry's most innovative brands — Ørgreen Optics, Kirk & Kirk and Woody's.

With insight and advice from designers and frame-makers like Frederic Lassalle, Karen Kirk and Silvia Banús Ferrer, we explore how meticulous planning, customer feedback and brand identity shape the journey of a frame from initial sketch to final product. This behind-the-scenes look at the industry reveals the exacting standards and creative challenges that define the art of eyewear design.

"As a born-and-raised Parisian, I've always loved looking at people on the café terraces and designing frame shapes for them; it all starts there for me," says Frederic Lassalle, head of design at Ørgreen Optics in Denmark.

"If a shape gives me specific energy, triggers happiness and feels right, then my instincts tell me that it's a shape worth pursuing for our clientele."

In the United Kingdom, Karen Kirk, co-founder, creative director and designer at Kirk & Kirk, always starts her design process with simple pencil and paper, allowing her to keep a tactile connection to her designs.

"My creative process always starts on paper," says Kirk. "I love the feeling of drawing; it feels closer to the finished piece, a bit like sculpting. For me, the minute you load the drawing onto a digital device, there is a slight detachment."



May the Best Frames Win

At the Ørgreen offices in Copenhagen, every frame design starts with extensive drawings and digital renderings. After rigorous debate, the design team flags about 60% of the initial 250 ideas for further development.

From there, it's off to early prototyping for the fronts and the temples of the frames.

"We have mastered this phase, which is executed at our HQ, allowing us to move quickly," says Lassalle. "These early prototypes can still be placed on a face, so we can judge the proportions and feeling."

STEP 1 IDEA GENERATION

Inspiration: Designers gather inspiration from trends and consumer insights.

Sketching: Initial sketches are created to visualize the concept.

Design Timeline

FROM CONCEPT TO MARKET

The prototype frames can be quickly fashioned on-site with a 3D printer for resin and laser cutting capabilities for metal.

With 146 frames left to consider, Ørgreen brings in more staff who help whittle it down to 95 designs destined for prototype production at Ørgreen's factory in Japan.

Among his many designs, Lassalle's favourite is the Volumetrica Acetate collection, inspired by his first visit to Ørgreen's facilities in Japan. It's here that advanced prototypes are created, complete with hinges, arms and nose pads. After more analysis, the team makes tweaks and orders a second prototype that is judged before a panel to see which ones will make the final cut.

"On my first trip visiting our Japanese factories, I was highly inspired by the workers'

impressive tradition for craftsmanship and rigorous sense of precision," he says. "Our design process narrows down from the initial 250 drawings to approximately 70 styles that make it into our timeless collections, giving you only la crème de la crème."

Weighing Design Choices

Kirk & Kirk Eyewear is known for its distinctive and vibrant approach to eyewear design. At the head office in Brighton, England, Karen Kirk is working hard to sketch out her next award-winning frame.

She's not only thinking about the colour and shape, but also the weight of the frames she's designing. It took years to perfect Kirk & Kirk's formula for acrylic, which gives the brand more creative freedom.

STEP 2 DEVELOPMENT

Material Selection: Choice of materials based on aesthetics and functionality.

Prototyping: First prototype is made for initial testing and adjustments.

STEP 3 REFINEMENT

Testing: Prototypes are tested for comfort, durability and style.

Final Approval: Design is finalized after rigorous testing.

STEP 4 PRODUCTION

Manufacturing: Frames are produced and prepared for distribution.

Quality Control: Each batch undergoes quality checks.

STEP 5 LAUNCH

Marketing: Campaigns are prepared and launched.

Distribution: Frames are distributed to retailers.

STEP 6 FEEDBACK

Consumer Insights: Feedback is collected for future improvements.



Above: The Ørgreen Optics design team drills down on hundreds of designs before settling on a collection.
Below: Jason and Karen Kirk founded Kirk & Kirk more than 25 years ago.

“Function and fit are major considerations, and our bespoke material is significantly lighter than the usual acetate, allowing us to create chunky-looking eyewear you can wear all day,” says Kirk. “There are lots of chunky frames out there, but they can literally be a pain to wear. We have more scope to produce frames with volume.”

Sometimes customers drive the designs. As a direct result of buyer feedback, Kirk & Kirk regularly produces limited editions featuring the brand’s popular matted acrylic frames. And perhaps the best feedback Kirk ever received was the Silmo D’Or award for her THOR design from Kirk & Kirk’s Centile collection.

“I like [THOR] because it’s powerful, funky and incredibly wearable for a wide variety of people. I still get a buzz from seeing people wear it.”



Meticulous planning, customer feedback and brand identity shape the journey of a frame from initial sketch to final product.

What the wearers want goes into every design decision at Woodys eyewear in Barcelona. Product and Purchasing Manager Silvia Banús Ferrer ensures that the creative team is always in contact with the sales team.

“It’s crucial for us to listen to market feedback,” she says. “Our petit line directly arose from the request of our customers for frames designed specifically for adults with smaller sizes (46-49).”

It can be easy to romanticize the frame design process. But there are many stakeholders to consider, especially the customers. “The brand strives to integrate market trends while maintaining its unique personality, particularly through its strategic use of colour combinations,” says Banús Ferrer.

“That’s why we engage in meticulous preliminary work focused on refining every detail that defines our new models.” **OP**

Advice for Aspiring Designers

“Are you a designer or stylist copying what is on trend? If you want to decorate frames, that’s fine, but as with all commercial design, it is the function and consumer’s needs that have to be met.”

— **KAREN KIRK**
co-founder, creative director
& designer, Kirk & Kirk

“I believe that authenticity and coherence are the most important aspects for any designer in their design development. It’s crucial to understand the brand while also leaving one’s personal mark on what they do. Additionally, I think that in this industry, understanding the technical and fitting aspects very well is very important to develop any new design. This point is crucial because if a beautiful design doesn’t achieve a good fit, success will be very difficult to attain.”

— **SÍLVIA BANÚS FERRER**
product and purchasing manager,
Woodys

“A good designer, like a good buyer, does not design for themselves but with their final clients in mind.”

— **FREDERIC LASSALLE**
head of design, Ørgreen Optics



Vesterbro
by Orgreen

Style Without LABELS

Gender-fluid fashion has taken the world by storm, and gender-neutral eyewear is breaking stereotypes and bending outdated rules of style

BY SUZANNE LACORTE



Style TIP

“Seek to sync with gender-fluid fashion, styling avant-garde eyewear that defines individuality and personal expression.”

- WENDY BUCHANAN
Eyewear Image Expert

6.

5.

7.

1. Thanks Much by OGI 2. OTP 181 by WestGroupe 3. Karl Lagerfeld KL6152 by Marchon 4. Gabe by AYA Optical 5. Rye & Lye Dionisio by Mood Eyewear 6. 4116 by MODO 7. Omega by Jean Lafont

Beyond BINARY

Transcending gender boundaries to embrace individual identity

BY WENDY BUCHANAN, EYEWEAR IMAGE EXPERT

The dynamic world of eyewear styling is no longer solely about following fleeting trends; it's about delving deeper into our clients' identities and crafting recommendations that authentically reflect their aspirations and self-expression.

As we push the boundaries of conventional gender norms within eyewear fashion, we champion inclusivity and celebrate the unique essence of each individual through what I like to call their Spec Style.

Spec Style transcends gender boundaries and embraces all aspects of individual identity, including personal values, clothing preferences, wardrobe colours, mannerisms, hairstyle, makeup choices, etc. As eye care professionals, our ability to go beyond initial first impressions and overcome assumptions demonstrates our expertise — and, more importantly, our compassion as human beings.

In the realm of optical fashion, we are witnessing a dynamic shift where gender norms are continually challenged and redefined, especially in how we engage with clients through their styling journey in our optical.

For years, traditional notions of masculinity, femininity and unisex have dictated how we showcase eyewear to consumers. However, the prevalent gender-based classification and presentation methods in optical galleries, once designed for convenience and ease in the selection process, are now perceived as outdated and exclusionary.

The blurring of gender lines isn't new — major clothing brands have been showcasing gender-neutral models for years. What's truly novel is our heightened consciousness of gender-related matters and our dedication to gaining a deeper understanding, adapting, and refining our language. This commitment allows us to serve our clients more effectively and evolve as professionals.

The era of strict gender categorizations in choosing eyewear is over. Today, we're driven by a language that speaks to the genuine essence of each person's Spec Style. Whether it's the boldness of the Daring Dramatic or the refinement of the Elegant Charmer Spec Style, eyewear choices now stem from personal expression rather than societal constraints.

The Daring Dramatic will be enthusiastically drawn to cutting-edge trends like accentuated cat-eye frames, chunky plastics, flat-top designs and vibrant hues. On the other hand, aficionados of the Elegant Charmer Spec Style are captivated by luxurious eyewear featuring softer silhouettes, high-end titanium construction, refined metal embellishments and understated, muted tones.

Introducing vivid adjectives into your conversations to showcase your eyewear selection fosters a connection that truly reflects everyone's authentic style. Consider descriptors such as sleek, contemporary, sophisticated, unconventional or glamorous to resonate with your customers' unique eyewear preferences.

In this modern era, inclusivity isn't just a buzzword; it's the foundation of sustainable business practices and will start to attract more professionals to the amazing world of optical. By prioritizing fashion over gender norms, we're creating dynamic, emotionally resonant experiences for eyewear consumers that are more than simply transactional.

Imagine walking into an optical gallery where eyewear is displayed not by gender, but by colour, trend and style. It's a future with boundless possibilities, where diversity thrives and everyone is styled with eyewear that truly speaks to them. Let's embrace this future together, where individuality reigns supreme, and everyone can love their eyewear. **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, she 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. For more information, visit: bespectacular.com/optical



Prismatic Pride

Pride Month is the perfect time to let your rainbow flag fly with these colourful frames that make a personal style statement.

BY SUZANNE LACORTE

1. Camp Fire Tang by OGI Eyewear.
2. FICKETT Pride Collection by Blake Kuwahara.
3. Paul Smith Kimpton by Marchon.
4. X-IDE Joyce by Mood Eyewear.
5. BA-BAAAANG by Etnia Barcelona.
6. Rivera Pride Collection by L.A. Eyeworks.
7. Midas by Tree Spectacle.
8. The Amsterdam Pride by Laibach & York.

BREAK-THROUGH!

New innovations in contact lens technology

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

It's an impressive year for advancements in contact lens design. In this edition of Lens Tech, we look at a revolutionary contact lens that protects and treats eye wounds before it dissolves into nothing. Additionally, we hear from the French inventor of a spiral-shaped lens that enhances vision clarity across a spectrum of distances and lighting conditions.

These innovations exemplify the cutting-edge research that continues to push the boundaries of eye care and vision enhancement in Canada and abroad.

A Lens that Treats & Protects

Researchers have developed a groundbreaking contact lens that doubles as a healing bandage and drug-delivery system. *Optical Prism* spoke with the team behind the discovery from the Centre for Ocular Research and Education (CORE) at the University of Waterloo's School of Optometry & Vision Science.

Traditionally, patients suffering from corneal abrasions use a clear bandage contact lens for about a week, in conjunction with eye drops, to manage the associated pain and fight any infection. CORE's new contact lens material combines both functions.

“The concept behind our enzyme-triggered release technology lies in the dosage’s adaptability: the quantity of medication delivered is proportional to the wound’s severity,” explains CORE’s Assistant Research Professor Chau-Minh Phan.

“Patients with larger wounds will release more MMP-9 enzymes that will trigger the contact lens to degrade more quickly, facilitating a greater release of any incorporated therapeutic agent, explains Phan. “Conversely, those with smaller wounds will experience a more gradual therapeutic release.”

The lens also biodegrades naturally over the course of treatment, eliminating the need for a lens extraction in a doctor’s office. This technology also shows promise for treating dry eye.

“The material leverages MMP-9 enzymes, which are also present at high levels in patients with dry eyes,” notes Phan. “Theoretically, we could also apply this material to facilitate the release of wetting agents or therapeutics via a contact lens or ocular insert that fits under the lower lid.”

Beyond ophthalmic uses, this material could be applied to treat skin-related

conditions where MMP-9 is present – for instance, administering care for diabetic ulcers or bedsores. The CORE team will continue testing and begin on the road to commercialization.

“Optimistically, provided there is sufficient funding and industry support, we aim to reach clinical trials after four years, assuming all progresses favourably,” says Phan.

Enhancing Vision Across Distances & Conditions

A lens with spiral optics patented in 2018 and developed by the French company Spiral in collaboration with the Laboratoire de Photonique, Digital et Nanosciences (LP2N), is now available for contact lens prescriptions for North American customers and for applications beyond optometry.

“Spiral lenses are a melting pot of refraction and diffraction, and it’s a new way of thinking about optics,” says Galinier.

Inspiration for spiral-shaped lenses came unexpectedly almost 30 years ago. Galinier was intrigued by the shape he observed inside a patient’s severe corneal deformity. This led him to develop the idea of a spiral on a lens that spins light.

“It’s like water flowing in a siphon or wind in a tornado,” says Galinier, explaining that vortexes concentrate energy in a tubular cone.

But it wasn’t until the mid-2010s that Galinier began to design and model this new lens. In 2017, he filed for a worldwide patent, which he personally funded.

The LP2N laboratory in Bordeaux, curious about this new optical principle, produced a publication using the lens supplied by Spiral. Galinier and the laboratory succeeded in machining the first Spiral lens in April 2020, in the midst of COVID-19 chaos.

Researchers have developed a groundbreaking contact lens that doubles as a healing bandage and drug-delivery system.

An overview of the lens’ test performance was published earlier this year in the scientific journal Optica. The “spiral diopter” offers clear vision over different distances, in different lighting conditions and with improved peripheral vision. The lens uses an innovative design that represents a breakthrough in optics: the Galinier principle – named after its inventor Laurent Galinier – creates an optical vortex to focus light more effectively by making it swirl.

Galinier, president of Spiral SAS, explains that the design of the spiral diopter enables him to create multiple focusing points so that a focusing tube is created regardless of pupil diameter.

Spiral has designed its own numerical simulation tool that allows the lens to be tested with different test patterns, such as the “E” of Snellen’s charts.

Spiral and Galinier state in their conclusions that the lens provided clear images, whatever the size of the pupil aperture and the amount of light present. They also found that modifying the twists of the spiral could adjust the optical effects of the lens.

Galinier says that spiral lenses have potential applications beyond ophthalmology, such as imaging systems in virtual helmets, cell phones, drones, autonomous cars and other technologies seeking to help us see the world more clearly. **OP**

Protect Yourself!

The ins and outs of professional liability insurance

BY ROBERT DALTON, OAC

Professional liability insurance (PLI) is a crucial aspect of any profession, and they are no exception. Opticians play a vital role in the healthcare industry, as they are responsible for ensuring that individuals receive proper eyewear prescriptions and fittings. Despite their best efforts to provide accurate services, things can go wrong. This is where professional liability insurance becomes invaluable.

Professional liability insurance provides peace of mind to opticians by covering expenses related to legal defense. Even if a malpractice claim is ultimately unfounded, the legal process can be arduous and expensive. PLI ensures that opticians have access to experienced legal representation to defend their interests and reputations.

This not only minimizes the financial burden, but also allows opticians to focus on their professional responsibilities rather than navigating complex legal proceedings. Employers often offer group professional liability insurance (PLI) to their opticians, but a key distinction exists: If you change employers, you lose your current PLI coverage.

COVERAGE LIMITATIONS

Review the details of your employer's PLI policy to determine the specific incidents and situations it covers. Some policies may have limitations or exclusions that could leave you exposed to potential risks.

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Depending on your role, responsibilities and potential liabilities, there may be situations where having your own personal PLI could offer additional protection beyond what is provided by your employer's policy.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

If you plan to change employers or work in a freelance capacity in the future, having your own PLI could be beneficial to ensure continuous coverage regardless of your employment situation.

It may be a good idea to consult with an insurance professional to assess your individual risk exposure and determine whether additional coverage is necessary. The OAC is aware of circumstances where the com-

Even if a malpractice claim is ultimately unfounded, the legal process can be arduous and expensive.

In this scenario, the new employer isn't liable for actions taken under the previous employer, and the old employer's insurance may cease upon your departure. With personal PLI that is free to all OAC members, coverage stays with you regardless of job changes or employment status, ensuring protection wherever you go and whomever you work for. Even when volunteering in community projects or services, you are covered.

Ultimately, the decision to obtain personal PLI while being covered under your employer's policy depends on various factors specific to your circumstances. It is essential to ensure that you fully understand the extent of coverage provided by your employer's policy. Here are some factors to consider:

pany policy was not completely engaged.

Professional liability insurance is required for opticians to obtain licensure and practice legally. Regulatory bodies and professional associations in Canada mandate PLI as part of their accreditation standards to ensure that opticians uphold the highest standards of care and accountability.

By obtaining PLI, opticians demonstrate their commitment to ethical practice and adherence to industry standards, provided free by joining the Opticians Association of Canada. **OP**

The Opticians Association of Canada'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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1. Results from a 20-site, 3-week study of Bausch + Lomb (kalfilcon A) Daily Disposable Multifocal contact lenses on 294 habitual multifocal soft contact lens wearers. 2. Product Performance Evaluation of a Novel Silicone Hydrogel Contact Lens: kalfilcon A Daily Disposable Contact Lenses - Summary of kalfilcon A Patient Comfort and Vision Outcomes for Patients Who Wore Lenses for 16 or More Hours Per Day. Bausch & Lomb Incorporated, Rochester, NY, 2021. 3. Kalfilcon A Multifocal and kalfilcon A Single Vision Mechanical Design Comparison. 4. Rah M. Ocular surface homeostasis and contact lens design. February 2021
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66

As an ECP, you are in a unique position to address migraine and light sensitivity within your patient community.

HOW YOU CAN HELP PATIENTS EXPERIENCING MIGRAINE & LIGHT SENSITIVITY

Patients with migraine often also experience photophobia, or light sensitivity, which can trigger or worsen their symptoms. You can provide support by offering specialized care to help patients manage the impact of light on their lives. Here's how:

ASK about migraine and light sensitivity during routine patient assessments.

STAY abreast of the latest research and developments in migraine diagnosis and management.

FOSTER collaboration with neurologists, primary care physicians and other healthcare providers to ensure holistic patient care.

PROVIDE educational materials and resources to build awareness of migraine and ways to deal with the condition.

CONSIDER becoming an Avulux Authorized Provider and offering Avulux Migraine & Light Sensitivity Lenses in your practice. Avulux Migraine & Light Sensitivity Lenses are the only clinically proven lenses that precisely filter light to help people living with migraine.

As an ECP, you are in a unique position to address migraine and light sensitivity within your patient community.

This specialized area of practice not only offers professional fulfillment but also holds potential for financial reward. And your patients will benefit. **OP**

To learn more about becoming an Avulux Authorized Provider, visit: ecp.avulux.com/opticalprism

Migraine and Light Sensitivity

A Vital Role for Eye Care Professionals

June is Migraine Awareness Month. As an eye care professional (ECP), you might wonder what this has to do with you. After all, your focus is on your patients' vision and eye health. But did you know that you can also play a key role in supporting those who suffer from migraine and light sensitivity – and establish a significant sub-specialty for your practice?

About one in every five patients who walk through your practice doors experiences migraine – making it as much as four times more prevalent than other conditions you may already be managing in your practice.

Migraine is a devastating disease that affects approximately 15% of the world's population. A complex genetic neurological disorder, it often includes recurring episodes

of intense headaches, accompanied by symptoms such as nausea, sensitivity to light and sound, and visual disturbances.

80%-90% of people with migraine have light sensitivity.

24% of migraine sufferers seek emergency room care due to severe headaches.

51% experience a significant reduction in work or school productivity, while **66%** report a similar decrease in household productivity.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), migraine ranks among the top 20 most disabling medical conditions, profoundly affecting quality of life and productivity. Notably, it disproportionately affects women, with those aged 30 to 40 experiencing the highest incidence.



Nearly 1 of every 5
of your patients is living
with migraine

Learn how practices are
elevating patient care
through migraine
sub-specialty

Visit ecp.avulux.com/op to become
an Avulux Authorized Provider



SUN *Sensible*

Preparing patients for summer's rays

BY DR. MARTIN SPIRO, CAO President

The eclipse in April had people thinking a lot about the importance of sun protection, but most don't have that level of concern for their regular, cumulative UV exposure. We're wired to pay more attention to acute risks than to chronic or daily risks, so naturally there are lots of blind spots when it comes to the more mundane aspects of protection and prevention. As eye care professionals, we can help fill in some of these blanks so our patients are prepared to take care of their eyes more consistently.

Lots of parents think of sunscreen before sending their kids outside, but the sunglasses habit is not as strongly ingrained — in one study, only 16% of Canadian parents report that their children wear sunglasses always or regularly while outside.

Remind patients that the cost of sunglasses needn't be a barrier — the level of sun protection is what counts, and there are plenty of inexpensive options that meet the standard. Have your patients bring their sunglasses to their appointments so you can check that they offer 100% protection against UVA and UVB rays.

Showcase a broad range of UV protection options in your dispensary. For some, fashion is the priority, and they'll want sunglasses that reflect their style. Function is key for others — suggest polarized lenses for those who boat, fish, or spend lots of time on or near the water. The convenience of magnetic or clip-on options, prescription sunglasses and multiple pairs may help others be more consistent with UV protection.



Sun exposure isn't the only consideration in summertime. Eye protection is essential for preventing eye injuries during a variety of outdoor activities, including gardening, summer sports, yard work, and hobbies. People often overlook potential hazards such as flying debris, sharp objects, chemicals, and harmful UV radiation as well as irritants like dust and pollen.

of allergy-related issues and offer tailored treatment plans.

Additionally, optometrists can educate patients about proper eye hygiene practices to mitigate allergic reactions and provide ongoing support to ensure effective management of symptoms. Remind your contact lens wearers about proper handling

Only 16% of Canadian parents report that their children wear sunglasses always or regularly while outside.

Safety glasses have come a long way both technically and aesthetically. Be sure to have a range of options on display to show that eye protection can look and feel good! A branch snapping back unexpectedly or debris from a weed whacker or leaf blower can turn a simple chore into an ocular emergency in a split second. A pair of safety glasses in the garage or garden shed is a very worthwhile investment.

More time outside is great and should be encouraged, but seasonal allergies can put a damper on the fun. Many people experience allergic reactions that can affect their eyes, leading to symptoms like itching, redness, watering and irritation. As eye care professionals, we can assess the extent

and cleaning. Removing contacts when swimming and making sure hands are washed well to avoid transferring sunscreen or bug spray from your fingers to your eyes or lenses is also important.

Equipping people with tips and tools to protect their eyes to reduce ocular injuries and sun damage sets them up for better long-term vision and eye health ... and a more carefree and enjoyable summer! **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.



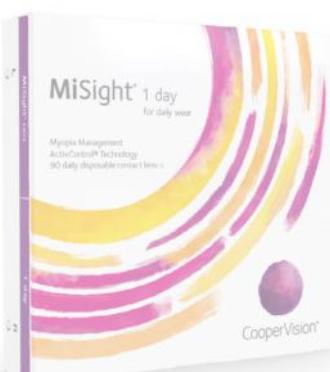
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[§]Compared to a single vision 1 day lens over a 3-year period.

1. Chamberlain P et al. A 3-year Randomized Clinical Trial of MiSight® Lenses for Myopia Control. *Optom Vis Sci.* 2019;96(8):556-567

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Special NEEDS

Embracing exceptionalities in eyeglass fitting

BY EVRA TAYLOR

Special needs eyeglass wearers need a special ECP touch. In the world of inclusivity and diversity, acceptance of people with exceptionalities who don't fit into the norm is a non-negotiable. People who live with neurodivergence, Down Syndrome or autism spectrum disorder, for example, are gaining increasing acceptance in society.

Even our concepts and language have changed to some degree. In some contexts, we have evolved from referring to this population as disabled to using more enabling frames of reference. But has the optical industry kept pace with this more progressive point of view? The truth is, it depends on who you ask.

"ECPs are presented with many challenges when providing care for special populations and neurodivergent individuals," says Dr. Nicole Maione, associate optometrist at Ottawa Valley Vision. "These may include the actual physicality of the ECP's clinic, as well as the emotional and sensory elements necessary for a comforting and productive appointment."

Individuals with Down Syndrome, those on the autism spectrum and the neurodivergent population in general often have visual problems that affect their functionality and ability to interact with their surroundings. In these cases, eyeglasses are prescribed to

improve their visual functionality, ocular alignment and depth perception.

Maione adds that it's important to create a warm, inviting and affirming environment where patients feel understood, normalized and cared for. Using declarative language and adjusting gestures, tone of voice and facial expressions, along with lengthening the duration of the appointment, can all

"ECPs need to choose the most appropriate ways to provide care for the individual without causing additional stress or anxiety on the patient."

help with providing services for special populations. Communicating to the individual exactly what is happening or what is going to happen provides structure and reduces the potential for panic in an examination and while fitting for eyeglasses.

"ECPs need to choose the most appropriate ways to provide care for the individual without causing additional stress or anxiety

on the patient," she explains. "This may look like playing a matching game for visual acuity, doing retinoscopy for refraction, utilizing the trial frame to refine a refraction, and performing a health examination with biomicroscopy or PanOptik in free space."

THE SPECIFICS OF EYEGLASS FITTING

For individuals with Down Syndrome or facial asymmetry, setting expectations is key. So is providing a unique, adaptable eyewear line available in a variety of sizes and shapes that can be modified to incorporate sun protection, notes Maione.

Most people with Down Syndrome have a flatter nose bridge, and this can make it challenging to find a good fit, as the frame tends to slip down the nose. Frames with nose pads can provide a better fit and ensure the optical centres of the lens remain in position for optimal visual function. Spring-loaded hinges are also beneficial if the individual has a wider head or is very active or rough in taking care of their eyeglasses.

When communicating with a person on the autism spectrum, the ECP must determine their preferences — whether they like coloured lights, animals, music, numbers or letters, for example — and use these to optimize their response. If the patient has limited fine motor skills, using targets that they can engage with by pointing their eyes or body or making a particular noise works well. Some individuals have text-to-talk Chromebook devices that they use in the examination to communicate. This can be particularly helpful when discussing the diagnosis and management plans.

In addition, there are numerous objective assessment techniques that are very informative and make no demands on the patient. Maione favours retinopathy, as it delivers extensive information about how an individual's visual system processes light and the functionality of their focusing system.

DEVELOPING A RAPPORT

Rick Thompson, an optometrist and the owner of Thompson Optometry in Brampton, Ontario specializes in developmental,

rehabilitative and general optometry. He emphasizes that when servicing special needs individuals, an ECP needs to meet the patient where they are; in other words, find their level and don't go above or below it.

“These patients deserve our respect and care. Take your time with these patients and you’ll be able to help them more than you think.”

“I first ask myself, ‘what are my goals and the patient’s needs?’,” notes Thompson. “The challenges include how to work with or around cognitive issues, communication or attention, interacting with those who are very tactile — who like to touch or grab the equipment — and those who are tactile sensitive or defensive, who don’t want any equipment on or near them.”

Flexibility and adaptability are key. Taking visual acuities using letters for distance and words at near are a first choice, but pictures, numbers and tumbling Es may be needed. Refraction can involve using the retinoscope and auto refraction. Internal examination may include fundus photography and OCT, which can be a boon when attention span is a concern.

Due to cooperation issues, some testing may need to be done over several days. “These patients can have good days and bad days, and in the end there are cases where some areas of testing just can’t be done. Developing a relationship and interacting with them at their speed is vital for those with special needs. If I’m too slow, the patient can become bored or lose interest. If I’m too fast the approach may induce anxiety.”

In the fitting process, the dispenser may need to hand the sample frame to the patient to try on, and the parent or caregiver may need to put it on the patient. Sometimes the patient needs to go home with a sample frame just to break down tactile defensiveness if it’s present. This can take days or even months to accomplish. The term “special needs” is very telling in itself.

Thompson’s tips include allowing the patient to process information and respond. Non-verbal patients who are actually low verbal, can give one word answers to some questions. For example, when taking visual acuity, they may be able to identify and say

a letter or picture if presented individually. Using concise language and few words is also helpful, and questions with yes-no answers may be needed. In most cases, Thompson defers to the parent or caregiver for suggestions on communicating with the patient.

“One thing I’ve learned is that some individuals with special needs can function at a very high level both academically and socially, while others function at a much lower level. Despite these complexities, they’re loving people who contribute in their own way. These patients deserve our respect and care. Take your time with these patients and you’ll be able to help them more than you think.”

Suzanne Altman’s 16-year-old daughter Lily has Down Syndrome and is near-sighted. For years, Altman has been advocating for Lily and experiencing frustration as she navigates Toronto’s healthcare system.

“It’s very hard to find optometrists who have experience working with Down Syndrome people,” says Altman. “This is essential because when I took Lily for her annual eye examination, they kept her prescription the same. However, a few months later we had an appointment at SickKids hospital to have her eyes checked to see if she was a candidate for fixing her one eye. The hospital doctor wrote a completely different prescription, including eliminating her bifocals. So there was a variance in her prescription with two different doctors.”

The majority of people helping to fit the frames aren’t experienced enough to assist those with special needs, she adds. “I’ve

tried to have Lily learn how to insert contact lenses and the people helping her were unsuccessful because they only teach one way. Due to Lily’s motor skills, she wasn’t able to do it, and they didn’t have an alternative way to show her.”

Perhaps the most important issue is that neurodivergent people process sensory input in different ways than neurotypical people. “Often we are either hyper- or hypo-sensitive to various sensory inputs and when we’re in situations where there is a lot of new sensory stimuli, it can overload us,” explains Bruce Petherick, a self-described proud autistic and an advocate at Autism Canada. “Also, if our routines are broken or we don’t know what is going on and what is going to happen, this can lead to a sense of overwhelm.”

People with autism often don’t look directly at an object, but tend to scan the object and its surroundings, adds Petherick. “I can imagine that could cause some diagnostic challenges for an optometrist, requiring them to determine if this is normal, healthy autistic behaviour or if there is a deeper medical reason. Optometrists should speak directly to the autistic individual and not through a caregiver. Historically, others have always spoken on our behalf, even when we can communicate our wishes.”

He points out that in terms of prevalence, government figures only cite diagnosis rates in children, ignoring the fact that there are actually more autistic adults in the world than autistic children. Access to diagnosis is limited and many people have self-diagnosed as autistic because they can’t access official diagnoses. Autism Canada has programs that can help optometrists make their space more welcoming to the neurodivergent community.

The connection between neurodivergence and vision is well-established. However, increased research and effort to identify and implement strategies and tactics to support the neurodivergent and disabled population would make a significant difference in the lives of patients and those who care for them. **OP**



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Collective PRIDE

CFDA Eyewear Designers Launch 2024 Pride Collection

In honor of Pride Month in June, seven CFDA eyewear brands are uniting to launch the third annual edCFDA Pride Eyewear Initiative. Designers Blake Kuwahara (Blake Kuwahara Eyewear), Christian Roth (Christian Roth Eyewear), Gai Gherardi & Barbara McReynolds (I.a.Eyeworks), Jeff Press (Press), Patty Perreira (Barton Perreira), Selima Salaun (Selima Optique) and Stirling Barrett (Krewe) will each offer a limited edition sunglass design, with a portion of proceeds collectively benefitting Bring Change to Mind.

Established in 2022, the edCFDA Pride Eyewear Initiative is an annual charitable venture driven by eyewear designers of the CFDA to target and highlight specific needs within the broad spectrum of the LGBTQ+ and gender non-conforming community. With donations to LGBTQ+ causes totalling more than \$100,000 in its first two years, an expansion from five to seven designers this season bodes well for a record-breaking year in 2024.

“While it is the eyewear designers, with the CFDA’s support, who have piloted this outstanding effort, it is also a testament to the optical community – retailers and customers alike – who have embraced the importance of visibility for these causes,” notes Gai Gherardi, co-founder/designer of I.a.Eyeworks.

Proceeds from sales of the 2024 edCFDA Pride Eyewear Initiative will benefit Bring Change to Mind (BC2M), an organization dedicated to ending stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health. The edCFDA’s collective donation will target

BC2M’s high school programs (where almost half of the teens identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community), as well as BC2M’s LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health Task Force designed to build empathetic allies and activists, and provide crucial support to LGBTQ+ youth.

“Access to mental health resources, particularly for LGBTQ+ youth, is so critical and often lacking in most communities,” notes Blake Kuwahara, founder/designer of Blake Kuwahara Eyewear. “We’re honoured to partner this year with Bring Change To Mind to help them continue their support programs and to broaden their reach to even more high schools across the United States.”

Pamela Harrington, executive director of Bring Change to Mind, adds: “Given the expanding legacy and impact of the edCFDA Pride Eyewear Initiative, Bring Change to Mind is honoured to be recognized for our mental health work with high school teens across the country. We are excited to partner with the designers that will be donating a percentage of their Pride collection sales to enable the growth of our LBGTQ+ programs.”

The participating eyewear designers are members of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, and lead the edCFDA – a working group within the CFDA that seeks to expand the understanding and presence of designer eyewear as a vital component of contemporary fashion.

The edCFDA aims to inspire, empower and promote awareness of eyewear design and the vitality of the optical industry through promotion, education, mentoring and collaborative initiatives.

About the Designers



BARTON PERREIRA

Patty Perreira and Bill Barton revolutionized the art of eyewear design at renowned fashion brands before embarking on their own path, joining forces in 2007 to establish Barton Perreira. Their mission was clear: to create an independent brand that perceives things differently, investing time and dedication in the craftsmanship that yields nothing short of the world's finest eyewear.

Renowned for the designers' meticulous attention to unique details, Barton Perreira eyewear comes to life through the expertise and virtuosity of Japan's leading artisans.



BLAKE KUWAHARA

Blake Kuwahara debuted his eponymous eyewear collection in 2015 with his artful but wearable design ethos and signature "frame-within-a-frame" concept.

By using a proprietary lamination process, Kuwahara creates a deliberate design tension by fusing two distinctive silhouettes.



CHRISTIAN ROTH

Designed by Christian Roth & Eric Domege, this brand has a reputation for subverting the conventions of luxury fashion. Christian Roth was the first eyewear designer to join the CFDA. Now, as a part of DITA Group, the storied label deconstructs its own archive to begin a conversation with a generation of consumers for whom a new paradigm of style and design has gained traction with breathtaking speed.



KREWE

This brand was founded in 2013 by creative entrepreneur Stirling Barrett. Much like its home city of New Orleans, KREWE embraces elements of culture and design from around the globe.

With artistic influence from architecture, music and celebration, the brand rewrites the concept of hospitality with retail environments where eyewear is a talking point, and either side of the lens gives visibility to a unique point of view.



PRESS

Jeff Press has been a creative force in the eyewear industry for more than two decades, and his PRESS eyewear label is making its debut this summer. Crafting eyewear as unique wearable sculpture is Press' trademark, taking inspiration from the worlds of art, design, automobiles, fashion and music. The result is detailed creations that speak to the power of eyewear.



L.A.EYEWORKS

Designed in Los Angeles by co-founders Barbara McReynolds and Gai Gherardi, L.a.Eyeworks' glasses are known for their bold shapes, imaginative handling of materials and expressive use of colour.

With trademark wit, socially charged messages and a spirit of creative adventure, this provocative brand vocabulary of L.a.Eyeworks has infiltrated the pop culture landscape from fashion to publishing to art and film. **OP**



SELIMA OPTIQUE

Selima Optique first opened its doors in SoHo in 1996, and now owns four stores across New York City, as well as two more in Paris.

Trained as an optician and an optometrist, Selima Salaun pioneered the Soho neighbourhood as a high-end optical retailer by introducing new and rare designs in both her signature candy colours and classic shades.

Her eyewear has set the mood for many seasons of fashion, with a diverse clientele of glasses lovers from all over the world.



Learn more about this partnership at bringchange2mind.org

Clinic Receptionist to Optometry Partner

Dr. Stephanie Kwan's journey to clinic ownership

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.



Dr. Stephanie Kwan and her retail partner, Rachel Perez, RO, at their Specsavers CF Lime Ridge location.

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**



There's never been a better time to join the Specsavers network. Start a conversation about partnership or associate optometrist opportunities at enquiries.ca@specsavers.com

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A Balanced Vision

Dr. Shalu Pal reveals top tips for ECPs looking to build their own trusted community practice

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

Whether she's cruising down a country road on her motorcycle or helping patients achieve the best possible vision, Dr. Shalu Pal is all about balance — career, teaching and travel — and she found a way to have it all.

In 2008, Pal founded Dr. Shalu Pal and Associates in Toronto's Yorkville neighbourhood. The clinic emphasizes a unique operational philosophy where all of its optometrists work part-time, allowing them the flexibility to dedicate substantial time to educational pursuits and charitable activities, enriching their professional lives and enhancing the quality of care provided to patients.

"Everything I have in my life is because of the education I received from school, my teachers, my friends and mentors," says

Pal, a graduate of the Southern California College of Optometry and the Oklahoma College of Optometry at Northeastern State University. "Encouraging others to dream big is my way of giving back to the profession that has given me so much."

When she's not at the clinic, Pal is running workshops or contributing to one of a dozen optometry-related organizations across North America. She's also a speaker, writer and consultant for most of the major contact lens brands, who recognize her work on advanced contact lens fitting for corneal repair post-trauma, disease, pain and high prescriptions.

"I was an undesirable associate," says Pal of the time before she started her own practice. "No one was looking for an OD who wanted to attend conferences and lectures all the time, so I decided to build a clinic that worked for me and that could be a home to others like me."

The interior of Pal's clinic is eye-catching and welcoming: a line of sleek stools stands before the counter, inviting consultation or quiet contemplation of frame choices — but there's more than meets the eye.

Pal started the "Locals Supporting Locals" initiative, offering space to patients who can benefit from a pop-up event in support of local charities or businesses. "Giving back to the community that has supported our office is very important to me."

She explains that the travel and networking she does is essential to delivering the best possible care for her patients. The interactions always help her to stay on top of the latest diagnostic tools and treatments.



ADVICE FOR EYE CARE PROFESSIONALS

Dr. Pal's insights draw from years of experience running a leading practice and mentoring the next generation of ECPs.

COMMIT TO EXCELLENCE

"Always go the extra mile. By treating people better than they expect, you set a standard that distinguishes your practice and drives success."

DISCUSS COSTS OPENLY

"Be honest and upfront about pricing with your patients. Avoid hidden fees to ensure that your staff are never placed in uncomfortable situations. Transparency is the foundation of trust between you and your patients."

UTILIZE YOUR SKILLS

"Leverage everything you've learned to enhance the lives of your patients. Your expertise is a tool to improve patient outcomes and satisfaction."

OFFER THE BEST RECOMMENDATIONS

"Always recommend the best options for your patients, regardless of cost, and explain your rationale clearly. Approach every patient without preconceived notions, and offer the highest standard of care you would want for yourself or your loved ones. If cost is an issue, be prepared to discuss alternative solutions that align with their budget."

"The best advice I can give anyone is to surround yourself with like-minded individuals who you aspire to be like and can learn from," she says. "Work with the people who will push you and encourage you to be the best version of yourself." **OP**

GROW YOUR PRACTICE

“ Nancy helped our group implement a patient handoff that resulted in a 25% increase in revenue per patient. ”

- DR. HEATHER COWIE, Airdrie Family Eye Doctors

NANCY DEWALD,
Your Strategic Partner

Let's Partner Together

The optical business is complex and my role is to simplify it so you can focus and generate more revenue.



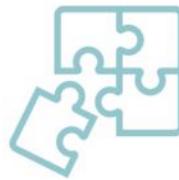
Identify Revenue
Growth and
maximize profits



Optimize team
performance and
a positive culture



Leadership Support
and Coaching



Implement process
and business
efficiencies



Schedule your
FREE consultation.
leaduptrainingandconsulting.ca



Silver Linings

How to turn customer complaints into opportunities

BY NANCY DEWALD

How can resolving customer complaints lead to loyalty? Research from People 1st International in 2023 reveals that 78% of customers are loyal to businesses that give them a good experience. But even more astounding, the same research shows that when a customer is unhappy and their complaint is resolved quickly and satisfactorily, their loyalty score rockets to 96%.

A concept closely tied to customer complaints is the Service Recovery Paradox (SRP). This refers to a situation where a customer who has experienced a service failure and has had the issue effectively resolved ends up being more satisfied and loyal than a customer who has never experienced any issues at all.

This paradox highlights the importance of not just resolving complaints, but doing so in a way that exceeds customer expectations.

To effectively resolve customer complaints and leverage the Service Recovery Paradox, businesses can follow these key steps:

1 LISTEN ACTIVELY

When a customer brings forth a complaint, it is essential to listen actively and empathetically. Allow the customer to express their concerns fully without interruption, showing them that their feedback is valued.

Listen to understand, not simply to respond. (Note: If the patient is being abusive or aggressive to staff in any way, you would end that relationship.)

2 BE APPRECIATIVE

Thank them for bringing the issue/concern forward and giving you an opportunity to make it right. This is an effective way to get others to let down their defenses.

3 APOLOGIZE SINCERELY

A genuine apology can go a long way in defusing a tense situation. Acknowledge the customer's dissatisfaction and apologize sincerely for any inconvenience caused.

4 TAKE OWNERSHIP

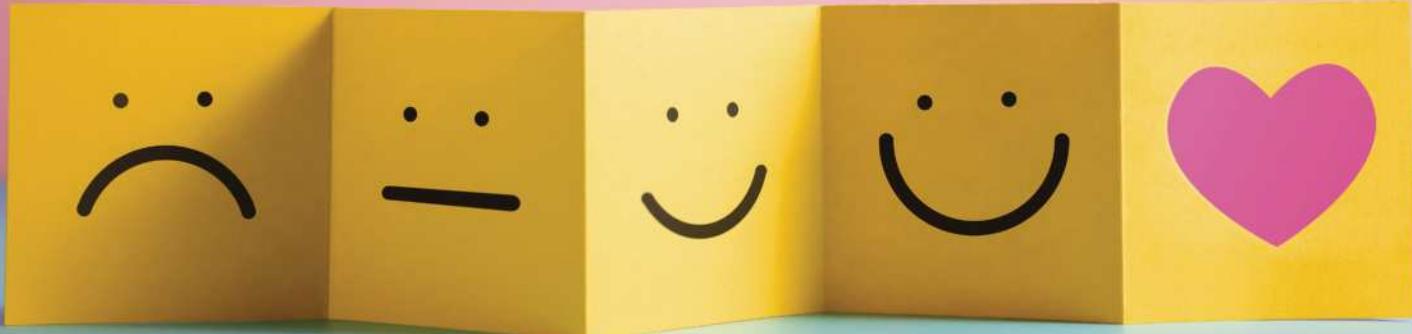
Regardless of where the fault lies, take ownership of the situation and assure the customer that you are committed to resolving the issue.

5 RESOLVE THE ISSUE PROMPTLY

Act swiftly to address the customer's complaint. Whether it involves providing a refund, offering a replacement or finding an alternative solution, ensure that the customer's problem is resolved to their satisfaction.

6 COMPENSATE IF NECESSARY

In some cases, providing compensation such as a discount, a free product or a service upgrade can further demonstrate your commitment to customer satisfaction.



7 FOLLOW UP

After the complaint has been resolved, follow up with the customer to ensure that they are now satisfied with the outcome. This shows that you value their feedback and are dedicated to continuous improvement.

Recently I was at a client's office when the frazzled receptionist approached the manager because an elderly patient was refusing to pay for part of his services. The patient was described as very angry and difficult.

I assured the manager that this was a great opportunity to have an open conversation with the intent of truly understanding the situation.

When the manager approached the patient and inquired about his concern, he explained that he wasn't shown his scan and he didn't even know if they took it (his wife was shown hers, and he simply didn't want to pay for something he didn't get).

Research from People 1st International in 2023 reveals that **78% of customers are loyal to businesses that give them a good experience.** But even more astounding, the same research shows that **when a customer is unhappy and their complaint is resolved quickly and satisfactorily, their loyalty score rockets to 96%.**

When we checked with the OD, she confirmed that he did not see it as she was having him come back for more testing and he wasn't to be charged for the scan. That message simply hadn't been communicated the first time.

The patient and his wife left happy and thanked the manager for clarifying the situation. And the patient wasn't unreasonable at all ... understandably, the receptionist had panicked due to similar situations in the past.

Often, we let fear get in the way of being present and truly understanding the situation at hand. I encourage you to let go of fear and lean into the situation. By doing so, your business can not only retain customers, but also cultivate loyalty and positive word of mouth. **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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GEMINI



MAY 21 – JUNE 20

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.

Gemini individuals are known for their versatile and adaptable fashion choices. They are not afraid to experiment with trends or mix different pieces to create unique looks. Gemini fashion is often characterized by a mix of classic and trendy styles, with a touch of playfulness.

Geminis are drawn to vibrant and bold colours that reflect their outgoing and lively personality, such as vibrant yellows, blues and greens. They also gravitate towards versatile clothing items or accessories that can be easily styled in different ways to suit their ever-changing moods.

Celebrities born under the shape-shifting style of the "twins" include Johnny Depp, Marilyn Monroe, Kanye West, Nicole Kidman, and real-life twins and style icons Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen. **OP**



Ancora by Etnia Barcelona



Infinity by Press



Podium by Lafont



4152 by J.F.Rey



Myrtle by Vint & York

Cracking the Code

Implementing QR codes for seamless patient interactions

BY STEPHANIE ROSS, MARKETING4ECPs



Quick Response (QR) codes saw a significant resurgence in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, providing contactless

touchpoints to give people quick access to information such as menus, forms, etc.

Today's QR codes are much more than simple geometric-patterned squares; these two-dimensional matrix barcodes are a dynamic tool for capturing attention, communicating information and getting people to act.

EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE

Creating a QR code is not only easy; it's also free, with plenty of free QR code generators available. You can use QR codes in print or digital marketing – emails, mailers, webpages, brochures, social media, and anywhere else you can display or upload marketing material.

QR codes can connect printed or static marketing materials to dynamic digital marketing materials like your practice website, patient portal or social media. You can gain a new social media follower in a blink – especially when they already have their main social media browser in hand.

By using QR codes, you can make it easier for your audience to connect with your brand and discover more about what you offer. Your patients see that curious

black-and-white pattern and want to know where it leads.

QR codes can also provide valuable analytics data by tracking QR code scans so you can know when and where your marketing materials are accessed.

By instantly transporting users to a service, product or booking link, you can enhance the user experience, making interactions smoother and more intuitive.

USER-FRIENDLY

Depending on your target demographic, some of your patients may be more tech-savvy than others. QR codes are generally user-friendly — it's as easy as opening up your phone camera. (Some smartphones open the link automatically, and others require a quick tap.)

That said, it's worth considering who you hope to connect with. There's no barrier if you're targeting Millennials (or younger). Generation X-ers are typically much more digitally literate than Baby Boomers — especially the younger half of Gen X.

Instead of using a QR code to register clients for a cataract clinic, you might benefit more from marketing registration



for your annual trunk show or introducing new technology at your dry eye clinic.

USING QR CODES

There's more than one way to use QR codes to facilitate seamless patient interactions.

QR codes can store multiple types of information – phone numbers, website URLs, images, calendar data, contact information – and can embed over 4,000 text characters. This flexibility means you can get imaginative with how you want to use your codes.

You can use QR codes to direct patients to content, get more reviews, handle registration for in-office events, offer promotions, or facilitate contactless payments. You might even use the data-storing capability to lead patients to a 3D office tour or a virtual frame try-on.

Really, the limit is your imagination – or your marketing team's.

Today's QR codes are much more than simple geometric-patterned squares; these two-dimensional matrix barcodes are a dynamic tool for capturing attention, communicating information and getting people to act.

MORE CHANCES TO ENGAGE

QR codes give patients the power to engage conveniently.

Many restaurants and e-commerce businesses (like Amazon) have incorporated QR codes to enable self-service. For eye care professionals, this might allow patients to check in for an appointment, access a direct link to an FAQ resource, or browse a product menu (such as frames brands).

When you ask patients to go to your website or follow you on social media, they don't need to type in a URL or search your name — they just point their phone.

It takes the hassle out of the commitment. And if a patient doesn't need assistance, they can access what they're looking for quickly and efficiently.

Paired with inviting prompts like "Leave a Review" or "Visit our Website," QR codes empower your patients to explore and engage on their own terms. They provide convenience and connectivity, all in one tiny square. **OP**

Stephanie Ross is a content strategist at Marketing4ECPs who loves crafting engaging content that helps eye care professionals reach and educate their patients. Find out more about **Stephanie and Marketing4ECPs** at marketing4ecps.com.



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