

40 OPTICAL PRISM

YEARS

September 2023 | Vol. 41 | No 9

TINTED LOVE

Trending styles in tinted lenses

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Fashioning TRENDS

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How to help your patients enjoy the spectacle safely

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Optical Prism (ISSN 0824-3441) is published 12 times a year by Quince Communications Inc.

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Non-paid subscriptions to *Optical Prism* are limited to optometrists, opticians, ophthalmologists and buyers and key executives at retail chain store headquarters. All other individuals are eligible for subscriptions at the above annual rates.

POSTMASTER

Send address changes to Optical Prism, 564 Rosedale Cres, Suite 100, Burlington, Ontario, Canada L7N 2T1 or email info@opticalprism.ca



GST Registration Number:
88541 6529 RTO01.

Printed in Canada by acorn | print production Canada Post Publications
Mail Sales Product Agreement No.
40040464

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CALENDAR

UPCOMING EVENTS

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September 8-10
4th World Congress of Optometry
Melbourne, AUS
worldcouncillofoptometry.info

September 11 & 13
Connect Newfoundland & Labrador
Corner Brook & St. John's, NL
opticians.ca/site/oac_calendar

September 27-30
Vision Expo West
Las Vegas, NV, USA
west.visionexpo.com

September 28-30
NBAO Conference, AGM & Trade Show
Moncton, NB
optomaritime.ca

September 29 – October 2
SILMO Paris, Paris, France
event.silmoparis.com/2023

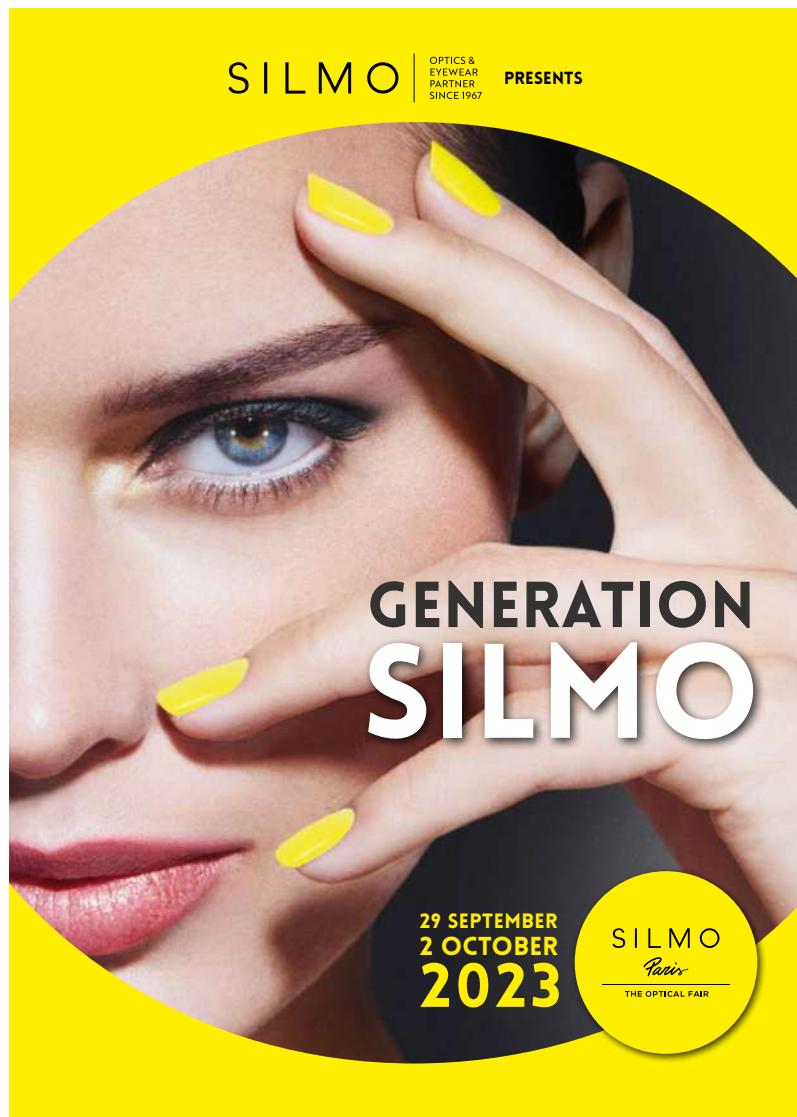
OCTOBER 2023

October 28-29, 2023
NSAO Conference & Vision Expo
Halifax, NS
nsaoconference.ca

NOVEMBER 2023

November 12
Fall Optifair Canada Trade Show
Vaughan, ON
aoece.com/optifair-trade-show

For more on these and other upcoming events, visit: opticalprism.ca/events



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40
YEARS

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I have a confession to make: when it comes to style, I sometimes emulate Jennifer Aniston or Princess Kate. I'm not a particular fan of either of them, but I find that their sense of style tends to fit my own. And of course, there's an aspirational quality in wanting to dress like one of the most beautiful and stylish women on the planet. I can't exactly look like them, but I can pretend, can't I? And sometimes, sporting a coat that Kate wore or carrying the same purse as Jennifer gives me just that little bit more confidence with which to face the world.

I suspect that it's the same with eyewear. If you see yourself as a Gwen Stefani, Jennifer Lopez, David Beckham or Patrick Dempsey – or if you want others to see you as a bit more like them – you might gravitate toward their personally branded eyewear, or eyewear they're spotted wearing or endorsing.

And if enough people want to wear it, that's how trends are born.

This issue is all about trends and trendsetters. Our assistant editor David Goldberg has written an informative feature about how eyewear companies connect and work with celebrity trendsetters, including Stefani, Beckham and Dempsey, who all have their own eyewear lines. And as he explains, companies like Ray-Ban are also bringing race car drivers into the mix of celebrity-inspired eyewear – because anyone someone admires can be a trendsetter.

Of course, the definition of celebrity is also undergoing an expansion thanks to social media, which has given rise to the “influencer” – a “regular” person who gains a following on social media and thereby becomes a celebrity in their own right. Writer Amanpreet Dhami profiles three global influencers who are taking eyewear and eye care to new heights.

It's a fascinating glimpse into the world of influential people, really cool eyewear, and eye care awareness.

Also in this issue, Nancy Dewald provides some tips on identifying trends, understanding what's driving them and reacting accordingly in her Eye Opener column. And be sure to check out Style Eyes, In the Frame and Fresh Looks for some of the newest eyewear trends.

That's just a taste of the content you'll find in the following pages. We hope you find it helpful in boosting your confidence and that of your customers!

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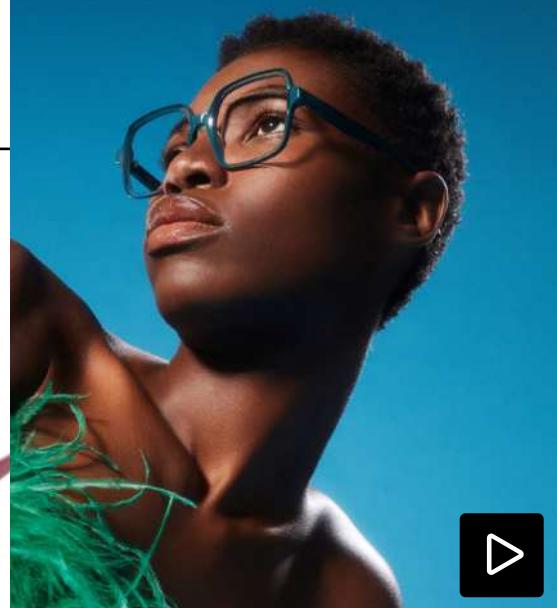
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(1) Based on achieving the highest composite score among premium Progressive designs of leading U.S. competitors on 14 attributes identified as important by a survey of U.S. consumers.
Measurements were the result of Essilor R&D state of the art aviator simulations 2022.
(2) Survey conducted in 2018 by an independent third party sponsored by Essilor. Results were reported by independent opticians and optometrists.



GIGI STUDIOS

GIGI Studios' new COLORAMA collection consists of three eyeglasses and three sunglasses. Each colour signifies a different mood: red for passion and enthusiasm; orange for joy and creativity; green for freshness and harmony; blue for calmness; purple for irreverent sophistication; white for discreet simplicity; and black for classic elegance. The collection is made from Italian acetate in exclusive new shades, with translucent variations for added depth..

For more information, contact your GIGI sales representative or visit: gigistudios.com



LAFONT

Nice and Nightclub are part of the Lafont Paris Collection, both available in four of the brand's unique acetate colours. Nice offers a soft, uplifted shape in bevelled acetate, while Nightclub showcases an angled cat-eye silhouette. Nerval is a style from the Lafont Reedition Collection, with a unisex vintage-inspired P3 shape and a brushed acetate brow line.

Lafont has also added 16 new colourways to its repertoire, including electric blue and tangerine orange nougatine, and an elegant blue marble.

For more information, contact your Lafont sales representative or visit: lafont.com





GIGI STUDIOS

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Visit us at SILMO PARIS 2023 - Hall 7 Stand E 239

FRESH LOOKS



Vivid Sky 1613



Vivid Sky 2956



Vivid Sky 2957



SILHOUETTE

Vivid Sky is an all-new design family of contemporary and modern frames with digital, art-inspired, visual effects. The colourful styles feature pronounced contours, a wide temple design and snap-hinge technology.

Vivid Sky frames are offered in round, rectangular and square shapes with matte or gloss finishes. Also available with additional optical glazing.

For more information, contact your Silhouette sales representative or visit: silhouette.com

KENNETH COLE

To celebrate the brand's 40th anniversary, Kenneth Cole Eyewear has launched two new Techni-Cole sunglass styles made of Ultem – a high-strength, UV-stabilized and heat-resistant hypoallergenic material that is lightweight, flexible and durable.

Model KC7251 has a square front, slim rims and shaped temples, available in Tortoiseshell with green lenses. Style KC7266 is a classic-inspired pantos frame enhanced with precious materials, in Opaque Beige with polarized smoke lenses.

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



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MAUI JIM

New from Maui Jim, model Tiger Lily is forged from pure titanium and finished with an acetate brow line trim piece, featuring proprietary MauiBrilliant lenses.

Aloha Lane has a sculptural construction with a bevelled, angular framework to flatter most face shapes, a Rainforest Kapa design on the temple interior, and SuperThin Glass lenses.

Inspired by Hawaiian flora, style Blossom offers a multidimensional cat eye silhouette with a bevelled frame front, in earthy dual-tone colourways with a Rainforest Kapa design on the temple interior.

For more information, contact your Maui Jim sales representative or visit: mauijim.com

LOOL EYEWEAR

The FW2023 collection from lool eyewear, the technical brand of the Etnia Eyewear Culture group, is inspired by contemporary art.

Colour and shape take the spotlight in this six-model collection, which includes three unisex styles, two designs for men and one for women.

The new models are part of the brand's light-weight Tectonic Series, which uses multiple colours to complement the wearer's face, style and identity.

For more information, contact your lool sales representative or visit: looleyewear.com



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ETNIA BARCELONA

Etnia Barcelona's artistic Autumn-Winter 2023 collection, *Miscléanea*, explores the connection between Japanese and Mediterranean cultures. This new optical series combines bold shapes with a Mediterranean feel in natural acetates with textures and details inspired by Japan.

Details include cherry blossom colours, prints representing koi fish scales, and a circular detail on the temple symbolizing the rising sun.

For more information, contact your Etnia Barcelona sales representative or visit: etniabarcelona.com



PERSOL

Honouring its passion for motorsports culture and the world of cinema, Persol is celebrating 100 years of the 24 Hours of Le Mans race through the gaze of its most iconic speedster – Steve McQueen. Worn backstage by the late great actor during the filming of his 1971 blockbuster, *Le Mans*, the Steve McQueen 714 style has a folding saddle bridge and distinctive drop shape.

The regular edition is available in Caffé, Terra di Siena, Opal Yellow and classic Black, with Barberini premium glass polar lenses in either light-dark gradient blue, iconic green or dark grey. The exclusive Centennial edition is a hand-finished ivory acetate frame with gold internal engraving and 24-karat gold-plated lenses, which comes in a dedicated white box with racing stripes, inspired by McQueen's jacket in *Le Mans*.

For more information, contact your Persol sales representative or visit: persol.com



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etnia  BARCELONA



Sardis

Shiraz

SPECTACLE EYEWORKS

Canadian designer Spectacle Eyeworks has added four luxe titanium styles to its house collection. The new additions are produced from whole front block titanium pieces, eliminating the need for solder points.

All four new styles (Sardis, Shiraz, Paris and Persepolis) are available in eight dual-layer colour combinations, including Lavender & Metallic Gold, Royal Red & Black, plus classic Black & White.

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



Los Angeles

GEEK EYEWEAR

Geek's latest style, Los Angeles, is a modern twist on a classic pantoscopic design. Barrel hinges join this handmade acetate frame to translucent, colour-matching temples, which are finished with vintage-inspired pins.

The keyhole bridge and built-up nose pads make this a comfortable and easy-to-fit frame. Available in three hues: Black-Crystal, Olive Green and Honey.

For more information, contact your Geek Eyewear sales representative or visit: geekeyewear.com



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JF3056

J.F. REY

With model 3056, J.F. REY has introduced a new concept of optical frames for men that combines titanium, stainless steel and carbon into unprecedented thicknesses and technical complexity, without sacrificing style and elegance.

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

VICTORIA BECKHAM

This oversized feminine navigator optical style from Victoria Beckham features a V-shaped metal framework that transitions into enamel lacquered temples. Available in Light Gold, Gold, and Gold/Black.

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



VB2130



NC2830



NC2843

NAT & COCO

Nat & Coco Eyewear has launched 12 new styles for men and women showcasing new acetate colours and laminations. Model NC2830 has a cat eye shape in bold colouring, while style NC2843 features a three-colour lamination on the frame front. Hot hues for fall include Cherry, Violet, Dark Emerald Green and Bold Demi Amber.

For more information, contact your Optika sales representative or visit: optikaeyewear.com

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ONE TRUE PAIR

One True Pair introduces three new biodegradable acetate models inspired by the latest shape trends.

OTP-170 is a square model with a retro design, oversized proportions and thick frames. Available in three colour combinations: Black Gold, Grey Rose Gold and Champagne Gold.

Model OTP-171 is a modified square model with vintage style, thanks to circular rivets on its end pieces and bevelling around the front. The Savanna and Sand colourways have a soft, translucent appearance, while the Matte Black model boasts a bold look that stands out.

The OTP-172 style is a '70s-inspired aviator with comfort-prone detailing, including a keyhole bridge and spring hinges. Available in Grey Crystal, Rose Smoke and Tortoise, with a pop of shimmer on the temple wire cores.

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



OTP-170



OTP-171



OTP-172



EC679

EASY CLIP

New styles from Easyclip include the women's feather-light style EC676 in multicoloured acetate with a sleek oval shape, and the EC679 and EC682 models with their bold mix of colours and patterns, geometric shapes.

All designs feature spring hinges and transform into sunglasses with polarized magnetic clips.

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



EC682



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GIGI Studios' Patricia Ramo

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

Barcelona is a destination for creative types to find inspiration and hone their craft. The bohemian city by the sea is a hub of innovation for brands like GIGI Studios and designers like Patricia Ramo. At just 30 years old, GIGI's CEO and creative director has reinvented the company, combining her contemporary vision with the vast experience of her father, Lluis Ramo, president and expert in design.

"My family has always been connected to the design and production of eyewear. I inherited my passion for well-made products from my father and grandfather," says Ramo, reflecting on the eyewear factory founded by her grandfather in 1962. "Since childhood, I have been surrounded by this world – the glasses, the company. It is something that I have been soaking up and for which I think I have an innate gift."

Ramo studied fashion design in London, England before returning to work for her father. By this point, she was destined to be the catalyst for GIGI Studios' metamorphosis into a young and dynamic brand driven by fashion culture.

"My father placed his trust in me from the very start. Little by little I took on more responsibility, and in the end I radically transformed the company."

From the outset, Ramo endeavoured to create an eyewear brand worthy of international recognition and a spot at Paris Fashion Week. She built a youthful team of 120 passionate people committed to GIGI Studios' mission, and brokered partnerships with independent eyewear sellers and distributors in more than 50 countries.

This fall, Ramo will put the finishing touches on her company's new headquarters in Barcelona, which is being brought to life



Patricia Ramo, CEO and Creative Director.

by her favourite interior designer, Isern Serra. The impressive space will showcase the brand's captivating collections and host clients in a home worthy of the GIGI Studios name.

Ramo finds inspiration for eyewear designs while travelling for work or pleasure, explaining that it helps her reflect on the brand's future. "I let myself be influenced by what surrounds me while wandering around cities in Spain and abroad. Working with the design team, we consider all of these loose ideas and apply them to an inspirational concept that shapes our next collection."

This summer, GIGI Studios launched a collaboration with El Silencio Ibiza, Ramo's past creative partner at Paris Fashion Week. The capsule collection includes three pairs of sunglasses – the Golden, the Ombra and the Ray – all inspired by the island of Ibiza's breathtaking landscapes and legendary nightlife.

In keeping with GIGI Studios' belief in expressive diversity, Ramo has taken care to design frames that fit different faces and lifestyles. She is also committed to sustainably responsible production by avoiding single-use plastics when possible, as well as working with more bio materials, recycled acetates and stainless steel. "It's imperative for me to feel proud of the responsibility and the impact of the company on our planet and society," she says. **OP**

Visit gigistudios.com for more information.



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Stars & Fast Cars

The power of celebrity-inspired eyewear

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

Ever since legendary actress Sophia Loren burst onto the scene with her eyewear collection in 1980, more and more celebrities have inspired and created their own eyewear. From J-Lo and Shaq to Elton John and Kim Kardashian, everyone wants a piece of the eyewear market. And with the valuation of the luxury eyewear market currently sitting at more than US\$21 billion, maybe that shouldn't come as a surprise.

Social media was absolutely a catalyst for increased interest in eyewear. With direct access to their followers 24-7, celebrities have ample opportunities to promote their brands to millions of people with a single post. And whereas magazine ads and TV commercials used to be all about pro athletes and actors, social media influencers are now getting their eyewear collaborations in, too.

But how do these partnerships work? How much does a celebrity endorsement or influencer collaboration help boost profits? And why do people care so much about the glasses that famous people are wearing?

Bend It Like Beckham

Few celebrities in this world have more marketing power than David Beckham. The retired soccer legend's net worth is climbing towards US\$500 million, with his personally branded endorsements alone – whether it's his David Beckham watches, clothes, fragrances or footwear – adding nearly US\$22 million per year (or \$60,000 daily) to his bank account.

That eye-popping income includes his take from Eyewear by David Beckham, a collection from Safilo Group. According to Vladimiro Baldin, Safilo's chief of licensed brands and global product officer, Beckham's existing brand was an obvious fit for the eyewear realm.

Few celebrities in this world have more marketing power than David Beckham. The retired soccer legend's net worth is climbing towards US\$500 million.

"We approached him; as an international style icon and someone who genuinely appreciated eyewear, he was someone we felt that we could have a strong collaboration with," says Baldin.

A longtime eyewear collector, Beckham started browsing Safilo's archives, considering many styles and even visiting vintage shops to get inspired. He was drawn to classic British style, along with the sophistication of Hollywood icons Steve McQueen and Paul Newman.



"He is a detail-oriented person," says Baldin, whose team meets with Beckham twice a year. "When we were initially designing the unique elements like the DB monogram and the talisman, we had long discussions with him to get them just right."

Beckham unveiled his first eyewear pieces at Milan Fashion Week in 2020, and is often seen wearing the spectacles and sunglasses he helped design. Along the way, other A-listers and Hollywood types have become fans of the Beckham eyewear brand, including actor Jake Gyllenhaal, who wore a pair

of DB sunglasses in last year's Michael Bay movie *Ambulance*.

Thankfully, Beckham doesn't have to navigate being the face of an eyewear brand alone – his equally famous spouse is the face of Victoria Beckham Eyewear, a highly successful collection from Marchon. The collection, noted for its bold silhouettes, is easily identified by the glamorous VB emblem on the arms.



VB238S_723



Need For Speed

Masses of racing fans cheered for Ferrari's F1 racing team in 2022 as drivers Carlos Sainz and Charles Leclerc walked onto the legendary track in Monte Carlo, the blazing sun bouncing off the rims of their limited edition Ray-Ban sunglasses. Ray-Bans are now a permanent fixture of the team's racing attire, and the Ray-Ban logo is also featured on their iconic red and black uniforms and on the side of the team's sleek SF-23 race car.

"We consider the driver's style and personality as we craft these special pieces," says Genevieve Labrecque, global head of marketing at Ray-Ban. "We take inspiration from our partnership with Scuderia Ferrari by incorporating elements within the racing DNA and design, along with the usage of high-performance material."

Ray-Ban carefully considers what every driver would want for the day of a big race – functionality and comfort, says Labrecque. But for consumers, the bottom line is that people love the fact that they can buy the exact same pair of glasses their favourite driver wears on race days and during their time away from the track.

Ray-Ban has also collaborated for several years with Scuderia Ferrari, producing eyewear with Ferrari-inspired features like clean lines, temple design akin to F1 car pistons, and the same carbon fibre used to build the fastest cars on the planet.



People love the fact that they can buy the exact same pair of glasses their favourite driver wears on race days and during their time away from the track.



The partnership with a legendary car brand like Ferrari was a can't-miss opportunity for Ray-Ban. And the brand knew that just like the gasoline fueling an F1 engine, an endorsement from superstar drivers like Sainz and Leclerc could kick a marketing campaign into high gear and accelerate sales. "The fan culture around the drivers is massive, which influences consumers to purchase," says Labrecque.

Other notable celebrity-driven designs from the world of fast cars include Eyewear by Patrick Dempsey – a collaboration with Porsche. Yes, that's right, Derek 'Dr. McDreamy' Shepherd, the *Grey's Anatomy* neurosurgeon, loves Porsche and sunglasses. The legendary sports car brand says the star actor was closely involved with every detail of the design.



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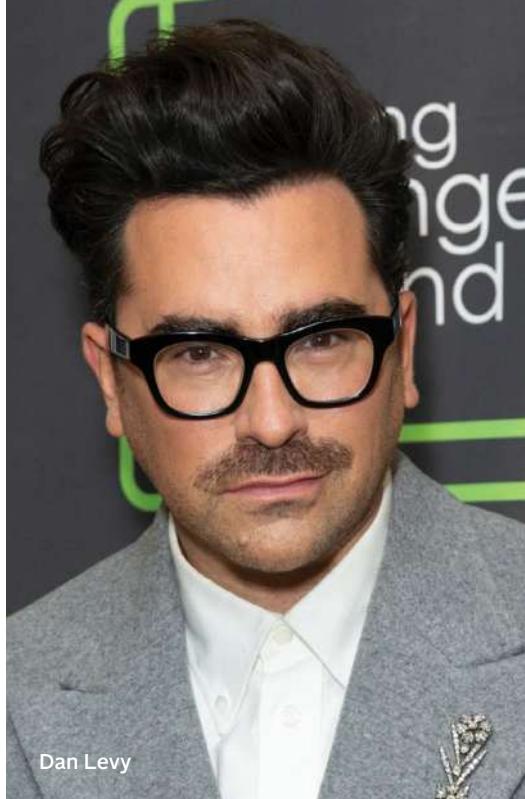
Social Media Impact

The definition of celebrity is rapidly widening to include social media influencers. The game has changed, so exclusively using movie stars, race car drivers and athletes to endorse a pair of spectacles means missing millions of eyeballs. "We've seen content creators from Instagram and TikTok drive consumer interest more than traditional celebrities," says Labrecque.

But "traditional celebrities" can also harness the power of social media with an immediate payoff, so endorsement deals and marketing campaigns plan photo opportunities and design content to maximize views online.

Several studies have found that simply announcing a celebrity endorsement can raise stock prices and profits by as much as four percent. Additionally, a study out of Michigan State University concluded that many companies make as much as \$6.50 for every dollar spent on influencer marketing.

No wonder the amount of celebrity-inspired eyewear available has grown exponentially. Dan Levy of *Schitt's Creek* fame started DL Eyewear, Tom Brady teamed up with Cloos, LeBron James has partnered with Oakley



Dan Levy

Several studies have found that simply announcing a celebrity endorsement can raise stock prices and profits by as much as four percent.



and Kylie Jenner launched her own eyewear collection as part of her Kylie Cosmetics brand.

Grammy winner Gwen Stefani just renewed her deal with eyewear distributor Tura for several more years, signaling that the superstar singer-songwriter is seeing great success with her Gx and L.A.M.B. by Gwen Stefani collections that launched in 2016.

"Gwen's passion for the product and fearless approach to its design have established her as a living icon in the eyewear industry," says Scott Sennett, CEO of Tura. "Over my nearly 30-year career, I have never seen a collaboration with an artist or celebrity generate such authentic design energy."

While the definition of celebrity is expanding, it's clear that famous faces will continue to sell glasses for years to come. "Celebrities are walking billboards for new eyewear trends," says Ray-Ban's Labrecque. "Consumers feel more confident wearing a trendier eyewear design when they see it on a celebrity whose style or fashion sense they admire." **OP**

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Tinted LOVE

Tinted lenses are a huge trend this season, with a rainbow of colours available. So whether your customers want to see the world through rose-coloured glasses or any other hue, there's no shortage of stylish options.

BY SUZANNE LACORTE



1. Iformi by Etnia Barcelona. 2. DB 7109/S by Safilo.
 3. Lanvin LNV 661SLBK by Marchon. 4. Elton by Kraywood. 5. Tiffany TF3089 by Essilor Luxottica.
 6. Trillion TO19 by Eredita. 7. Lemtosh by Moscot.

Style TIP

Lenses with a splash of colour up-level the fashion potential to create an impressive seasonal accessory.

Warm complexions glow in amber and green shades, and every skin tone is guaranteed to look "cool" in blue.

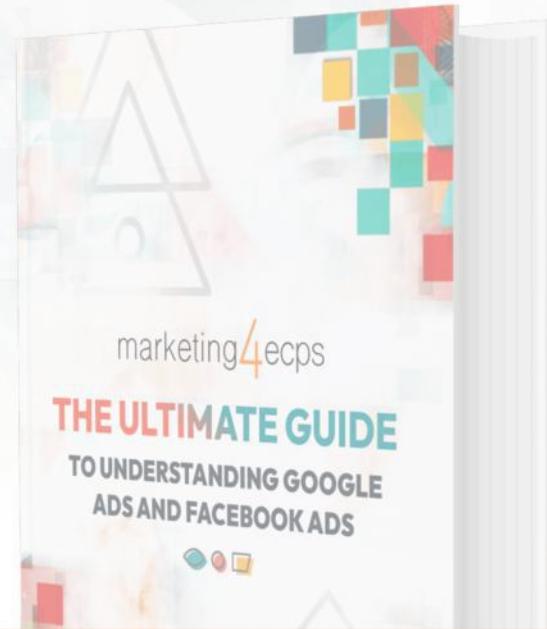
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The World of Influence

Optical Prism takes a deep dive into the fun and innovative world of eyewear and eye care influencers, and how they're impacting our industry

BY AMANPREET DHAMI

With social media blowing up in the last decade, influencers – those who build a relationship with their audience and become celebrities in their own right, with the ability to affect the purchasing decisions of others – have cropped up in almost every industry and niche. And the optical sector is no exception, with influencers bringing fresh perspectives on eyewear style and optical health for both consumers and eye care professionals.

We spoke with four eyewear influencers across the globe to bring you an update on what this world of influencers involves, and to showcase the exciting work they do outside of the traditional optical environment that's making waves in style, education and awareness.

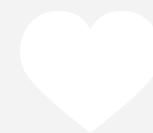


Sheena Taff

@optician.about.town

Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

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70K

Sheena Taff became an influencer by simply following her desire to share her passion for eyewear. Taff loves “showing people that glasses can be thought of as so much more than a required utility, including lenses as a part of the eyewear style story.”

As an optician, she constantly heard her clients moan and groan over eyewear, including comments like, “Choosing glasses is as bad as finding a bathing suit” or “A single pair of worn old glasses that are half a decade old still work!”

Finally, Taff took to social media in an effort to start a conversation and ultimately shift negative or ambivalent feelings about eyewear. “I share the joys of wearing glasses, and how glasses allow one to express personality and individual style,” she explains. “Seeing better with the right lenses can improve every aspect of life. And glasses can be an inspiration for what you’re going to wear in the morning; or better yet, pair your outfit with one of the many pairs of glasses you have in your eyeglass wardrobe!”

Taff has built brand collaborations while maintaining her authenticity by being selective about her brand partners. “If you wouldn’t catch me wearing the glasses or lenses in real life, then you won’t find me promoting it on social media,” she says simply.

Her key brands include Rimmel, an independent eyewear brand that creates frames in incredible shapes and unusual material mixes; Transitions lenses, a decade-long part-



Optician and social media influencer Sheena Taff wearing a GIGI Studios frame with Transitions lenses in amber.



Sheena Taff

@optician.about.town

Glasses can be an inspiration for what you’re going to wear in the morning; or better yet, pair your outfit with one of the many pairs of glasses you have in your eyeglass wardrobe!

ner that allows Taff to educate her followers about the visual benefits of quality lenses; and finally Safilo, a larger company that is in tune with the benefits of working with influencers and building communities.

When it comes to trends and how she determines them, Taff distinguishes two types: “wave trends” and “phenomenal trends.”

“Wave trends come from a fashion house or brand – the creator of the products,” she says. “These trends make a splash at launch, but aren’t adopted by the mainstream audience and vanish quickly. In contrast, “a phenomenal trend captures the attention and adoration of many and becomes interpreted in many ideations. These trends have staying power and longevity. These trends have a mainstream inclination and are investable for sellers and eyecare professionals.”

ECPs can take a page from Taff’s book when identifying or recommending trendy eyewear to their customers.



Sarah Layte
@the_exclusive_eyewear_agency
 Leeds, United Kingdom

Follow

SARAH LAYTE DESCRIBES HERSELF AS AN EYEWEAR ENTHUSIAST WHO LOVES TO MAKE PEOPLE FEEL AND LOOK FANTASTIC IN THEIR EYEWEAR.

After working in the industry for 25 years, Layte opened her own eyewear wholesale business two years ago. She was always told that every pair of glasses suited her, so she created her Instagram account



Sarah Layte wears one of her favourite eyewear brands, Tree, in a bold black frame called Elettra.



Sarah Layte
@the_exclusive_eyewear_agency

I give my followers the confidence to try different shapes or colours, and to ultimately be more adventurous with their eyewear.

to showcase her range of eyewear and help fuel her business. Now with almost 3,400 Instagram followers, she always has fun with her content, which is built on the motto: 'wear what makes you feel great.'

"I give my followers the confidence to try different shapes or colours, and to ultimately be more adventurous with their eyewear," she says. Layte also uses social media to share everything from an eyewear compilation reel or customer visit post to the successes her customers have with her eyewear collections.

Her brand partnerships include a recent discovery, Tree Spectacle. "Minimalist with superb use of colour and design, this Italian eyewear brand was designed by Marco Barp using premium bioacetate and Japanese titanium. It's one of my favourite eyewear brands."

One of the biggest trends Layte sees is people becoming increasingly adventurous with eyewear. "From cat eyes to bold shapes and every colour under the sun, it seems that an eyewear revolution is happening."

Her Instagram page was also the impetus for her eyewear styling business. "I started styling with The Exclusive Eyewear Agency, and so many opticians saw what I was doing and asked me about styling" that she took this as a sign to follow through. Now, eyewear styling is one of her passions.



Kristie Nguyen
 @dr.kristienguyen
 Orlando, Florida, USA

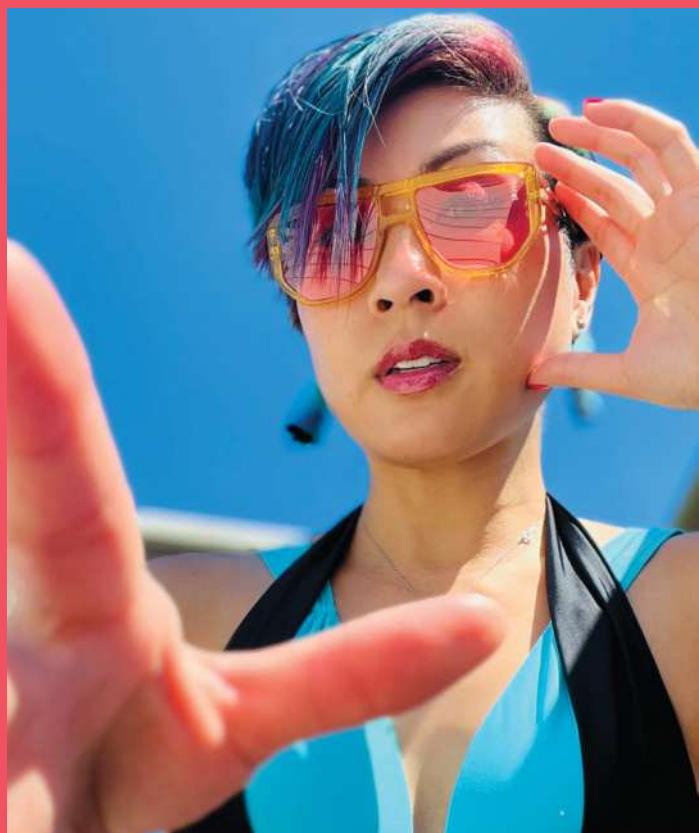
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75

KRISTIE NGUYEN'S JOURNEY AS AN EYE CARE INFLUENCER BEGAN AFTER SHE FACED BURNOUT SIX YEARS AGO AND FOUND A DIRECT SALES OPPORTUNITY IN THE EYE CARE INDUSTRY, WHICH ENABLED HER TO BUILD HER PERSONAL BRAND. TODAY, NGUYEN'S SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE IS A PASSION PROJECT COMPLETELY SEPARATE FROM HER DAY JOB WHERE SHE NORMALLY WORKS WITH OTHER DOCTORS OR INSIDE OF A RETAIL LOCATION.

With 2,700 followers across two Instagram accounts, 3,400 on Facebook, 1,000 on TikTok and more than 24,000 on LinkedIn, Nguyen sees herself as an “edutainer” and connector. “I educate with entertaining videos to make learning about eye care and eye health



Kristie Nguyen shows off these EDA Ghost sunglasses against her vibrant rainbow haircolour.



Kristie Nguyen
 @dr.kristienguyen

I try a mix of eyewear, eye health and lifestyle. It's really about how I'm feeling and what's inspiring me in the moment.

fun and engaging. I also connect people to products and services that could benefit them within the eye care industry.”

Throughout her journey as an influencer, Nguyen has worked with a variety of brands that have resonated with her personal identity. In one example, she says she felt powerful and beautiful telling her followers that “beauty is what we make of it” in a post about Kazoku Lunettes, a brand that focuses on bold, fashionable and fun eyewear with an Asian fit.

Through her work as an influencer, Nguyen became an advisory board member and social media KOL influencer for Cookie, a quarterly magazine from her home country, Vietnam, that brings eyewear awareness to countries around the world. She has also partnered with Optometry Divas, a woman-founded organization that empowers, connects and promotes female optometrists, allowing her to build community online and also make an impact in her life as an optometrist.

Despite the resonance she has with her social community, Nguyen doesn't see herself as a trendsetter; however, she does like to push boundaries. “I pair bold shapes or colours with my ever-changing hair colours,” she notes. “Colour is fun and exciting, and I want people to see that through me, it can be empowering and liberating.”

When it comes to social media content, if Nguyen isn't inspired by it, she won't share it. “I try a mix of eyewear, eye health and lifestyle. It's really about how I'm feeling and what's inspiring me in the moment.”



Dr. Jenn Chinn

@dr.chinnchinn

San Diego, California, USA

Follow

Dr. Jenn Chinn was a fashion and travel blogger prior to graduating from optometry school, so online content has always excited her. She started sharing educational and relatable eyecare videos on Instagram as a creative outlet, with the goal of educating the general public and her family and friends.

These days, the main purpose behind her social media content is three-fold: education and awareness; entertainment; and helping people build confidence in eyewear.

“When I was younger, I felt really self-conscious about having to wear glasses – I was getting picked on and being called four eyes, so I never felt confident or attractive in my eyewear,” she recalls. “Once I began exploring different styles, colours, shapes and different brands, I started becoming more and more confident in how I looked. I practice what I preach. I wear eyewear every day and I hope to encourage people to find confidence in their eyewear and to step out of their comfort zone when it comes to choosing it.”



Dr. Jenn Chinn

@dr.chinnchinn

I wear eyewear every day and I hope to encourage people to find confidence in their eyewear and to step out of their comfort zone when it comes to choosing it.



Dr. Jenn Chinn posts content related to eyewear as well as eye care education and awareness.

Her Instagram platform motivates her to continuously educate herself and research the ever-changing trends in eyewear, from what celebrities are wearing to what eyewear companies are designing for new collections. “I truly only look at what speaks to me as an individual, and whether it fits my personal style, personality and image. This allows me to stay truly authentic in my content and my messaging as an influencer.”

She says current eyewear trends include bold acetate frames in strong colours and unique shapes. **OP**



Optical Vision Group Expands Canadian Footprint With Innovative Franchise Concept

The Optical Vision Group is set to revolutionize the eyewear industry in Canada with its expansion of Optical Warehouse/Entrepôt de la Lunette optical stores. Through a carefully crafted franchising concept, the company aims to attract optometrists, opticians, and other qualified investors to join its mission of providing affordable eyeglasses to consumers nationwide. With its proven success and unique approach, the Optical Vision Group is poised to make a lasting impact on the optical retail landscape.

AFFORDABILITY MEETS QUALITY

“Our Everything You Need, Simply Less Expensive™ concept, which was developed in Quebec, resonates with glasses wearers in all provinces,” says Daniel Beaulieu, President and CEO of Optical Vision Group. “In and outside of Quebec, we see the public’s anticipation of our arrival in major cities across Canada, and we wish to build a national network to cater to the increasing demand for affordable eyeglasses that we see from coast to coast.”

FRANCHISING OPPORTUNITY

“We have seen an increase of interest in our unique concept by eye care professionals ready to become entrepreneurs,

or eager to expand their existing business. We are also seeing interest from general investors that see the value in optical retail,” states Pierre Charenton, Executive Vice President, highlighting the growing interest in the Optical Vision Group’s franchising opportunity. The low-cost franchising proposition offers potential investors a promising return on investment over a three-year period.

SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURS AND INDEPENDENT PRACTICE OWNERS

“We offer entrepreneurs a turnkey model that helps them succeed. From site surveys and store buildouts to optometry suites that are equipped with the latest equipment and a tele-optometry setup to maximize eye exam bookings, operators can have the tools and support they need to stay ahead of the competition,” says Beaulieu. “With the addition of our tele-optometry program, developed in collaboration with the world-renowned firm Visionix (formerly Luneau Technologies and Optovue), the Optical Vision Group offers franchisees an innovative way to expand their services, reach a broader customer base, and maximize their revenue potential,” highlights Ted Hahn, Vice President of Business Development.

NATIONAL EXPANSION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

“Our high-quality product assortment and offering, which includes a Best Price Policy on all lenses, frames starting at just \$20, and a complete pair with anti-glare starting at \$70, are exciting for independent practice owners who have an option that allows them to be very competitive,” adds Stéphane Beaulieu, an optician and Vice President of Business Development in New Brunswick. The Optical Vision Group aims to build a national network of Optical Warehouse stores, catering to the increasing demand for affordable eyeglasses across major Canadian cities.

The Optical Vision Group’s continued expansion of its Optical Warehouse/Entrepôt de la Lunette optical stores through a franchising concept marks an exciting development for the eyewear industry in Canada. “We look forward to meeting with all the interested entrepreneurs and discussing the possibility of bringing the Optical Warehouse concept to more communities,” says Beaulieu. By offering high-quality eyewear at affordable prices and providing comprehensive support to franchisees, the Optical Vision Group is reshaping the optical retail landscape. As the company grows and expands its network, consumers across Canada can look forward to accessible and affordable eyeglasses without compromising on quality. **OP**



Above, left to right: Ted Hahn, Vice President of Business Development; Daniel Beaulieu, President and CEO; Pierre Charenton, Executive Vice President; Stéphane Beaulieu, OOD, Vice-President of Business Development in New Brunswick.

To learn more about the Optical Warehouse franchise opportunity, please send an email to franchising@opticalwarehouse.ca

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OPTICAL WAREHOUSE



The Pros & Cons of Reviews

BY NICK SAMSON, Associate Publisher

Last month, I shared my thoughts on why having a customer or patient feedback process was important to your business, and the positive message it sends to your customers and patients.

All of my clients employ both a continuous online survey process and customer-generated online reviews. Businesspeople often ask me what customer feedback medium they should actively promote: online surveys or online reviews. My answer is usually online reviews. Let me tell you why.

We all try to deliver an experience that customers and patients will love, but sometimes we fall short, the process fails, and the experience we deliver is not what we wanted nor what the customers expected. When that happens, I'd rather deal with the disgruntled customer in private and not in front of the entire world in an online review. Remember, once a review is posted, it never goes away – it never gets deleted.

But that said, online reviews, if managed properly, can have a significant positive impact on your business. Here are my top pros and cons of online reviews ... and if you manage your reviews, the pros will outweigh the cons.

Pros:

Increased Credibility: Positive online reviews build trust and credibility for your business, as potential customers rely on reviews from peers to make purchasing decisions.

Free Marketing: When customers share their positive experiences, it can lead to word-of-mouth referrals and increased brand visibility.

Customer Insights: Reviews can provide valuable insights into customer satisfaction levels, which can be used to make improvements to your products or services.

Engagement & Interaction:

Responding to reviews, whether positive or negative, shows that a business values customer feedback and is actively engaged with its customer base.

Local SEO: Positive reviews on Google can improve a business's local search engine ranking, making you more visible when customers search for relevant products or services in your area.

Cons:

Reputation Damage: Negative reviews, especially when they're numerous or highly visible, can harm a business's reputation and deter potential customers.

Bias & Manipulation: Businesses have limited control over what customers or competitors write in reviews, which can lead to unfair or inaccurate criticism that may not accurately represent the business's efforts.

Impact on Decision-making: While surveys accurately quantify every aspect of the experience, reviews either generalize the experience as positive or negative, or target a specific issue, which in some cases causes an emotional "knee-jerk" reaction from management without knowing for certain if the issue was a one-time occurrence or a symptom of a systemic issue.

Privacy Concerns: Reviews may contain private information or personal attacks that can create privacy concerns for both customers and businesses.

Time & Resource Investment:

Monitoring and responding to reviews, especially on multiple platforms, can be time-consuming for businesses, requiring consistent effort to maintain a positive online presence.

It's important for businesses to actively manage their online reviews, encourage positive feedback, address negative feedback professionally, and strive for transparency and authenticity. A balanced approach to online reviews can help businesses leverage their benefits while effectively managing their potential drawbacks. **OP**

Nick Samson is co-owner and associate publisher of *Optical Prism* as well as founder and president of FreshFeedback, one of Canada's leading customer experience measurement companies. FreshFeedback has been helping small and large businesses deliver customer experiences that drive revenues for more than 40 years.

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Case Study: Maximizing Clinical Outcome

Dr. Sun shares her 'wow' moment just months into starting her own practice



DR. ELLEN SUN, OD
Optometry Partner,
Specsavers CF Masonville Place

For optometrists, one of the most rewarding parts of the profession is being able to make a difference to people's lives. Whether that's helping them to see clearly, with glasses or contact lenses, to even saving their life.

Dr. Ellen Sun, optometry partner at Specsavers CF Masonville Place, shares one such experience during her very first months as a practice owner that emphasizes the power of a comprehensive eye exam with the Topcon Maestro2 ocular coherence tomography (OCT), which Dr. Sun provides to every patient as part of her standard eye exam.

"A few weeks ago, I saw a 39-year-old woman who had been experiencing mild blurry vision at a distance, and some dizziness and headaches, for around two weeks. She thought that she probably just needed some new glasses, and Tylenol

seemed to be helping with her symptoms. She'd been studying for a final exam the next day and had also been busy taking care of her kids," says Dr. Sun.

"During her exam, I noted her vision was around 20/25 in each eye without glasses and I could refract her to 20/20. Everything seemed fine at first glance, but after reviewing her retinal images and OCT, it was clear that both of her optic nerves were swollen and there was a hemorrhage above the right optic nerve. The increased RNFL thickness as well as no direct visualization of optic nerve head drusen were key in making the diagnosis of papilledema.

"This can sometimes be harder to see with normal lenses, so having advanced diagnostic equipment at my clinic and including OCT scans as part of a routine eye exam allowed me to efficiently examine my patient when she came into the exam room."

The patient's retinal pictures showed blurred disc margins in both eyes and a nasal disc hemorrhage in the right eye.

"The kind of swelling I saw indicated a potential build-up of cerebral spinal fluid inside the brain which could cause raised intracranial pressure. This can be life threatening and lead to seizures, strokes and other neurological damage.

"I talked her through my findings and sent her to the ER straight away with my report recommending an MRI/CT and, if necessary, a lumbar puncture to rule out increased intracranial pressure. I also gave her a doctor's note to excuse her from her final exam.

"The next day, I got a report back from the ER saying that she'd had multiple CT scans and had been admitted overnight. A blood clot had been found in her left parietal lobe that was causing her brain to swell, and she was officially diagnosed



with cerebral venous sinus thrombosis (CVST). I'd been emailing with the patient to check on her status, and it sounded like she was in great hands at the hospital, receiving treatment from a neurologist as well as a neuro-ophthalmologist.

"She later emailed me to thank me for showing her kindness during the exam and helping her get the urgent care that she absolutely needed. That was one of the best feelings I can get for doing what I do, and truly shows that you can't underestimate the power of a comprehensive eye exam with OCT!" **OP**



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66 I'm impressed and proud
of the quality of optometry
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Moody Blues

According to experts, blue is a calm, quiet colour that evokes trust, loyalty and confidence. No wonder these blue frames are so appealing! From deep navy to palest seafoam, these blue frames are sure to fit any mood.

BY SUZANNE LACORTE



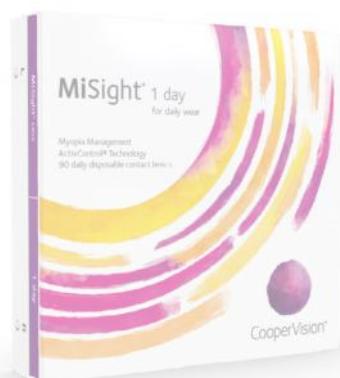
1. Colorama 6818 by GIGI Studios. **2.** Missoni MIS 0150 by Safilo. **3.** F3722S by WestGroupe. **4.** Arthur M6-44A-PL by Glossi. **5.** VANNI-4253 by George et Phina. **6.** Brut21 by Etnia Barcelona. **7.** NIAG3197 by Lafont. **8.** Finn Blue Moon by Eredita.



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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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Eye Level

A selection of important, innovative or unique eyewear and eyecare products we're loving this month.

1 OPTOMETRY PHONE CASE

This tough but lightweight phone case is compatible with most current iPhone sizes. Made from polycarbonate (shell) and rubber (lining), the two-piece design offers impact resistance and shock dispersion.

[etsy.com/ca/listing/
optometry-phone-case](https://www.etsy.com/ca/listing/optometry-phone-case)



2

WAVERUNNER

OPTICAL ABT

OPTICAL ART
All pieces in this exclusive collection are eye care related, in styles to match all decors. These unique pieces are available in a variety of sizes and orientations to fit your space and group together.
opticaldisplays.com

opticaldisplays.com



3

ECO CHAIN

Crafted from recycled acrylic, this eyewear chain features anti-slip loops to protect and secure your glasses. Available in Green, Aqua and Gray Tortoise.

**peepers.com/
products/eco-chain**

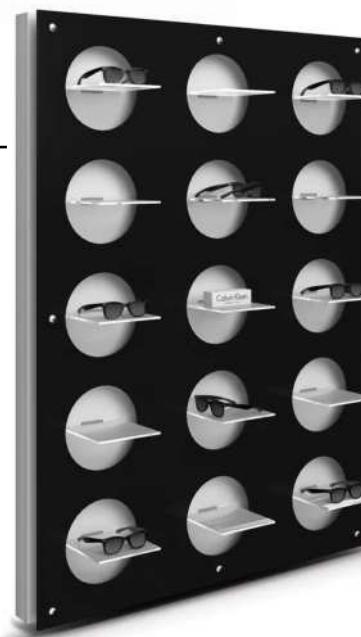


4

LUNA SERIES DISPLAY

Luna is a non-illuminated frame board series from Fashion Optical Displays that highlights individual frames. Great for pairing with other displays.

wall display styles.
**[fashionoptical.com/
dispensary-collections](http://fashionoptical.com/dispensary-collections)**





Four Decades of Caring for Customers

Raouf Hakim came from adversity in Lebanon to success in Montréal with LOPTICIEN.CA

BY NICK KREWEN

Quality, service and trust. Although those three factors are the philosophical tentpoles of LOPTICIEN.CA's two award-winning locations in Laval and Duvernay, Québec, there was a time in owner Raouf Hakim's life when realizing the dream of becoming an optician seemed distant, if not unlikely.

The year was 1975 and civil war had broken out in Hakim's native Lebanon, interrupting his biochemistry studies at the American University of Beirut, forcing him to flee to Egypt and live with a cousin.

However, the ordeal ended up whetting his appetite for his lifelong profession.

"My cousin, instead of making me wait and do nothing in Egypt, had me visit a friend who was an optician," he recalls. "I liked the field, so I started going to school to study as an optician. That's when I started."

But then the threat of conscription into the Egyptian Army forced him to cross the Atlantic and settle in Québec. "With the military service, you know when you're going in but you never know when you're coming out," says Hakim. "That's when my mother told me to go see her sister in Canada, to start a life there."

With \$100 to his name and an uncertain future, he rolled up his sleeves and – thanks to an aunt and another cousin – scored a \$2.50-an-hour sales job at an optometrist shop within three days of landing in his new home.

Because of a good word put in for him with the dean at the University of Montréal by that cousin, who was studying biology there, Hakim was given special permission to attend classes and finish his biology degree without waiting an additional year to be admitted.

After three years at the University of Montréal, Hakim then spent the next three studying to be an optician through CÉGEP, Quebec's general and vocational college, in Longueuil.

Despite a full schedule of work and study, Hakim was able to bring his parents from



HAKIM'S HELPFUL HINTS

LOPTICIEN.CA's Raouf Hakim has a few recommendations for running a unique store whose central focus is fashion. "It's the way that you practice that really makes the difference," he says.

1 SPOT FASHION TRENDS

"Every year, I go to New York to see what's new and take appointments from manufacturers who are coming in from Italy and France. At the end of September, I'm going to Vision Export Paris, and some of the frames that I get ahead of the curve, people look at and they laugh. But these frames are already popular in Europe and here in Canada – we're maybe a year or two behind in terms of fashion – so the frames that I have here in my shops are sometimes a little bit ahead of the latest trends. But that's what differentiates me from my competitors."

2 TRUST YOUR GUT

"There are some types of frames that I don't buy, even if I like them, because I'm not sure those glasses – even with the hip look – are going to adjust properly when the customer wears them. There are vendors that I meet where I ask them to change the product because of the way the temples are manufactured or based on the curvature of the frame. When I look at it, I imagine how it's going to look on the customer and how they're going to react."

3 OFFER RARE CHOICES

"My store is not your regular optical store; it's fashion-based with a shiny marble floor, with special lighting and brand names posted on the wall, red chairs for sitting, and fashionable colours. It's designed to attract customers' eyes to my frames from the moment they enter the store. Half of my inventory consists of regular frame brands like Ray-Ban, but more than 50% of them are uniquely different, with their own look. People who come to my stores want something different, and they find it in terms of colours and frame shapes that I carry in stock."

4 BE METICULOUS

"When I'm buying for the store, I see how the frame is manufactured, how the hinges are made, and how the plastic housing is polished. Building glasses is an art – for example, there are Italian manufacturers who are making nice-looking frames, but you see the finish of the frame and it needs to be 15 mm in terms of thickness, and they've framed it down to four or six millimetres. The more you polish the frame, the less perfect it is. So I examine the frame, ask questions about the source and location of where the plastic is manufactured, the thickness of the plastic they're using, and the procedure: is it finished or handmade or done by machinery?"

"What makes it look nice is the finishing and the detailed work within the frame. So when you're selling top-form frames, the way the plastic is manufactured and the comfort fit are factors. I study everything precisely: the angle of the frame, the curvature of the frame, the thickness of the temple, the fashionable look – those all go into the decision as to whether I'm going to take the frame. Sometimes I find a gorgeous colour, but it's a cheap frame because the hinges are not well made or the plastic is not well polished, so in a case like that, I'll pass. Every frame is selected due to finishing quality. If it's a metal frame, I'll look at how it's been welded, and if it's titanium, I look for superior quality."

5 ENHANCE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

"I have in-store espresso machines, because it's important to make the customer feel that they're at home. When I serve the person, I invite them to relax and have a cup of coffee, which I bring to them in an espresso cup. It's especially effective when there are couples. Both of them are enjoying an espresso as I'm informing them about the materials they're considering and the type of lenses they're going to decide about at the end. That's what gives me satisfaction: explaining all their product options, why they're paying this amount of money and why it's a worthy investment. Because it's not just a pair of spectacles you're going to wear just to see properly; it's a fashion statement, and you have to enjoy wearing them."

"There is no hard sell, and sometimes when they can't decide which frame they want, I'll pack three or four frames for them to try them at home, encouraging them to show them to their wife, husband, son, daughter. And they will come back and repeat buy, because they feel they're home."

6 EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION ARE PARAMOUNT

"Education has to be the number one priority. We have to give the practitioner more information; some opticians and optometrists don't know how the frames are manufactured. This is a field where there are so many little things that you need to know, you learn something new every day. Informative interaction between the manufacturing brands and professionals helps us all understand more about both frames and lenses."

Lebanon to Canada “so they could have a better life.”

Shortly after his 1983 graduation, Raouf Hakim, now with BSc and OOD after his name, was working at optometrist Greiche & Scaff when he was approached by store owner Franco Compoli with a proposition: Compoli, experiencing an illness, wondered if Hakim would be willing to purchase the business.

There was only one problem: Hakim didn’t have the financial means to purchase it. “I was shaking because I couldn’t go to the bank for a loan. So he (Compoli) lent me the money to pay him back within two to three years.”

Not too much later, Hakim purchased his second store from Compoli in Montréal North, started supplying pharmaceutical companies with safety glasses, and began to build an empire that encompassed 12 stores.

“I imported my own frames and safety glasses, and I had big contracts with companies like Wyatt,” he recalls.

He eventually sold all but two of the stores – his current locations employ 10 including an optometrist – so he and his wife at the time could adopt two daughters from China and raise them.

Today, at the age of 69 and with LOPTICIEN.CA recently winning its third Transitions Academy Award for Canadian Eye Care Practice of The Year, Hakim says he’s still having fun in his chosen profession.

Currently specializing in high-end, good quality frames and lenses, Hakim says one of the secrets of his success is selling products that are atypical of regular brand names – although his stores include them as well.

“That’s the soul of my practice,” he says, adding that his store offers everything from hand-painted, wooden, plastic and

adjustable, recyclable frames to some that are made of “leaves and bird feathers.”

Lens offerings are also diverse: “We do all kinds of contact lenses – one day, two-week, one-month, progressive bifocals, prescription – even hard contact lenses.”

But mostly he treasures his customers – and will spend hours with them to ensure that all their questions are answered.

“You have to be honest and give them what they need,” says Hakim, who is celebrating his 47th year in the business – his 40th as a store owner.

“I’ve built my business on referrals, and the greatest satisfaction for me daily is when you see somebody who is happy because they’re comfortable with their glasses, their vision is good and there’s a smile on their face. The day I feel the customer is getting on my nerves is the day I hand over the keys to the person who wants to take it over.” **OP**

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Colour My World

There's no cure for colour blindness, but lens technology is giving millions of people a multi-coloured perspective

BY DAVID GOLDBERG

Jack Sansone is a talented actor and stunt performer from Toronto who has worked alongside the star-studded casts of films like *Pompeii* and *RoboCop*. He's also among 1.6 million Canadians living with colour deficiency, meaning that without outside aid, his eyes only see 10% of the millions of hues most people see.

"At work, I have to wear crazy makeup as a zombie or monster, and I can't see the full effect of how I look," says Sansone, whose colour deficiency prevented a career in policing and made it difficult to enjoy beautiful landscapes. That is, until he got a special pair of glasses.

EnChroma and other brands offer glasses with special lenses, some with prescription, that enable people to see certain colours for the first time. For some, the glasses work fast, and that can trigger a lot of emotions. Videos posted online show wearers taken aback by the gift of colour vision, but it doesn't work that way for everyone.

"It takes a little while for your brain to adjust," says Sansone about his experience with EnChroma. He adds that the glasses didn't cure his colour deficiency, but they did wonders for his mental health.

"Colours pop out a little more. It's nice when you have sad days that the world seems a little brighter," says Sansone, who can

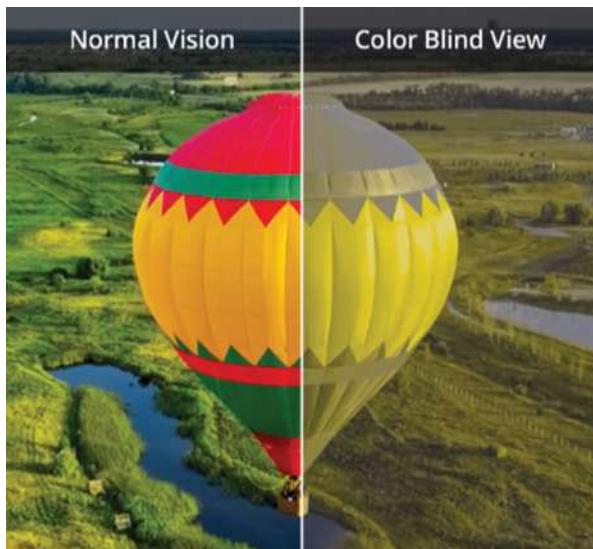
now thoroughly enjoy Southern Ontario's fall foliage and a rainbow over Niagara Falls.

Dr. Marc Kallal, optometrist at Tofield Eyecare and Varsity Optical in the Edmonton area, has been dispensing EnChroma glasses for several years. He says the lens uses a special notch filter to block a certain band of wavelengths, allowing a colour-deficient person to experience less confusion and see more colours.

"Patients who are mildly or moderately colour deficient do quite well with these lenses," says Kallal. "Patients who have a more severe or deeper colour vision loss don't do as well."

But there's no single answer – some people who seem like good candidates won't get results, while other patients who don't fit the profile end up having a great response, says Kallal. "We won't know until they try it on. It's very much a patient-specific thing."

Bud McKenzie was sceptical about trying colour-blind glasses. The construction manager from Red Deer, Alberta didn't find out he was colourblind until grade two. He endured years of teasing, couldn't pursue certain jobs, and was forced to limit the colours in his wardrobe so he didn't accidentally wear something garish. When he did try colour-blind glasses, he still wasn't sure at first.



"I didn't really see a big change – until I walked outside," says McKenzie. "There happened to be a cherry tree that was in full bloom, and that was the first time I had seen pink flowers. I always thought they were white. And it was the first time that the traffic lights were actually green instead of white."

An avid clay-target shooter, McKenzie is also working with his optometrist in Red Deer to develop a special lens to help him see pink clay pigeons in front of a green forest landscape – a particularly troublesome combination for a colour-blind marksman. McKenzie has been hunting for a solution to this problem for a long time.

According to Jeff Hovis, associate professor at the University of Waterloo's School of Optometry and Vision Science, people have been experimenting with different filters to manipulate colours since the 1800s. The concept of using notch filters is also not new. Didymium glass used in safety glasses and visors for glassblowers and blacksmiths is a notch filter created by adding rare elements to glass. These filters have also been used as an aid for colour disclination.

In modern times, Hovis says colour-blind glasses can be useful for many focused tasks such as working with colour-coded spreadsheets, horticulture, reading medical images and more. But not all glasses are created equal. EnChroma's user guide says "appropriate cautions" should be taken when driving, and experts like Hovis say getting behind the wheel can be a challenge.

"Anything that's sort of a dark tinted magenta or red, it's going to be problematic for identifying traffic lights," says Hovis about the lens colours of various colour-blind glasses. "Basically what happens is the red light usually pops out, but drivers can't see the green or the yellow because these lights are too dim."

Anyone can buy a pair of colour-blind glasses online or at their favourite brick-and-mortar store, but Dr. Kallal advises his patients to get tested first.

"We will usually test for colour vision deficiency. Most of the time, that is a genetic thing that we're born with, but sometimes it could be a sign of another ocular health issue or concern that is not a genetic-related thing, and then that might be a bigger concern," he explains.

"We make sure patients are taking the steps needed to ensure their overall eye health is good so that if we get the glasses for them, they're going to work well, and work well for a long time." **OP**

COLOUR BY NUMBERS

350 MILLION people worldwide are colour deficient.

1 IN 12 MEN and **1 IN 200 WOMEN** are colour blind.

90% of colour-blind adults say it affects them at work.

14% of colour-blind people say family and friends do not take them to museums, parks, gardens and tourist destinations because they're colour blind.

8 IN 10 colour-blind people say they were made fun of for colouring something "wrong" as a child or adult.

Source: EnChroma

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Sights on Montego Bay

Canadian Vision Care celebrates fifth anniversary of eyecare clinic serving Jamaicans

BY DAVID GOLDBERG



November marks five years since Canadian Vision Care (CVC) opened the Community Vision Centre of Excellence in Montego Bay, Jamaica. It's the latest achievement in CVC's 40-plus years helping people on the island, during which volunteers have educated hundreds of Jamaican eye care professionals and treated thousands of patients.

"Our focus changed from just mandated work to how we can actually affect the structure of the country and get involved," says Gerry Leinweber, reflecting on his experience since he co-founded CVC in 1981 with fellow University of Waterloo alumni Gord Hensel, Andy Patterson and Brad Almond.

Since inception, CVC and the Jamaican Lions Club have provided high-quality, cost-effective eye care in Jamaica to those who would not be able to afford it, including eye exams, glasses, surgery and medications. Dedicated ECPs are trying to close the gap in ophthalmic care in Jamaica, where only 50 ECPs care for a population of three million.

There's also intense focus on providing life-changing cataract and glaucoma surgeries. In one example, volunteer Matt Thompson recently led a team that taught MSICS cataract surgery to local surgeons. Impressively, the group performed 23 surgeries in three days.

CVC volunteers have also helped locals including Latoya Morgan, a mother of two who couldn't work because of her severely compromised eyesight. Morgan told volunteers at the clinic, "I can't see anything. I can't see faces at night time. I'm not able to see the faces of people I know." But she couldn't afford the roughly CA\$500 cataract surgery – until she

Canadian Vision Care has started a GoFundMe page to help the Montego Bay clinic acquire a laser and a cataract surgical instrument (Phaco machine).



got help from CVC. Now, she's back at work and caring for her family.

CVC's biggest challenge has been moving from the completely free model to a more sustainable model of not making money, but not losing money either, notes Leinweber. This move was necessary to cast a wider net for donor support from large organizations.

Each patient is asked to make a small donation, but no one is refused services or surgery if they can't afford to contribute, says Leinweber.

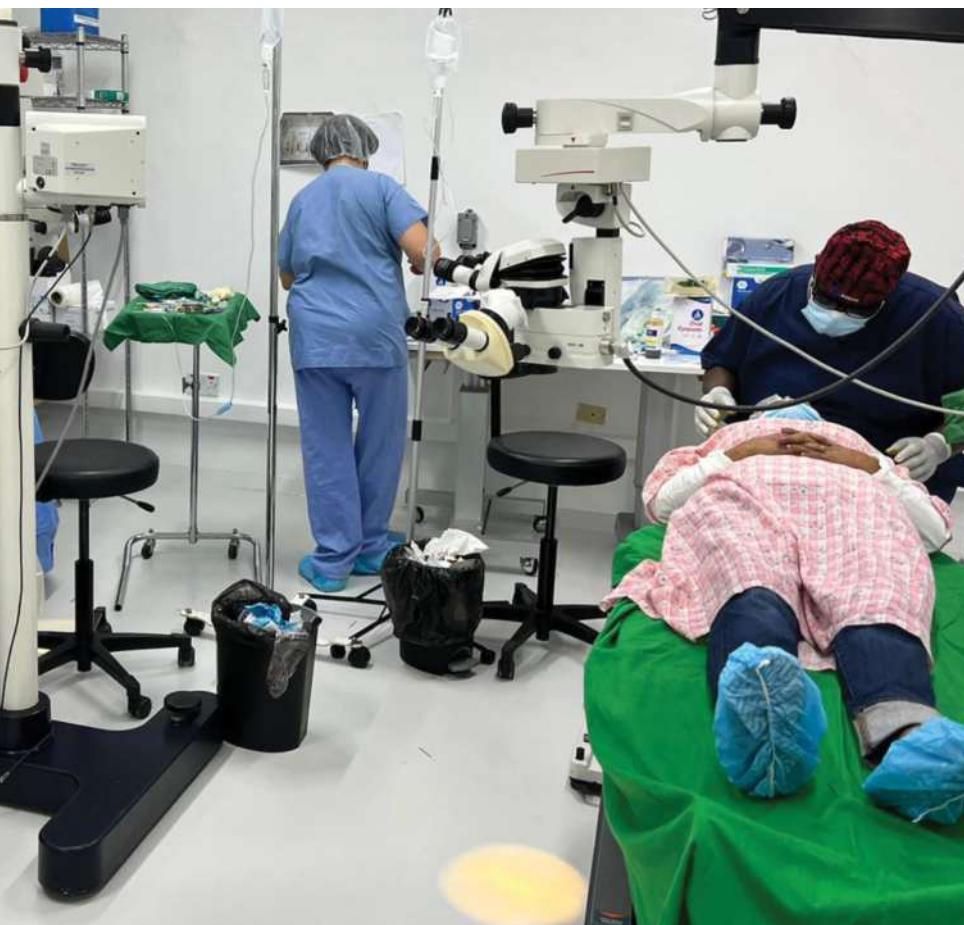
"In that way, we actually had big success in our Jamaican operation," he explains. "One of our surgeons was also bringing his own private patients in to do surgery, renting the space and paying the IT staff for the services."

Pearl Barnett-Forte manages the clinic in Montego Bay. She says she's humbled to support an area of health that is highly inaccessible to many Jamaicans.



Along with providing essential eye care services for Jamaicans, training eye care professionals on the island is another important function of the Montego Bay clinic.

"It is so rewarding to serve those who cannot afford it, who appreciate the eye care that they need," she says. "Sight helps people perceive and navigate their way around the mysteries of the world, and adds a level of understanding to minds that enquire."



The Montego Bay clinic will celebrate five years in service this November, although Gerry Leinweber and his colleagues started helping Jamaicans see better more than 40 years ago.

CVC has provided more than \$60 million worth of eye care to Jamaicans since operations began, starting with the donation of a microscope to the Mandeville hospital. Today, the clinic has started a GoFundMe campaign with the goal of raising \$89,000 to acquire additional diagnostic and surgical equipment.

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

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Playing Hide & Seek with the Sun

Eclipse dos and don'ts

BY DR. MARTIN SPIRO
President, Canadian Association of Optometrists

As summer fades, the anticipation of fall arrives, and with it, the need for awareness about children's vision before they return to school. This year, that need holds an additional element, as two remarkable solar eclipses are set to occur in Canada.

On October 14, 2023, most of southern Canada will witness a partial solar eclipse, followed by a total eclipse on April 8, 2024 spanning from Southern Ontario to Newfoundland and Labrador, with the rest of Canada experiencing a partial eclipse. While these events are awe-inspiring, they also pose potential risks to our eyesight if proper precautions are not taken. As eye care professionals, protecting our patients' eye health and

safety is paramount during these exceptional occurrences.

During a solar eclipse, the moon moves between the sun and the earth, partially or completely blocking the sun's rays. The danger lies in the fact that even during a partial eclipse, the sun's intense radiation can cause severe damage to the eyes. Directly looking at the sun during an eclipse can lead to solar retinopathy, permanently damaging the retina's light-sensitive cells. Hence, it is crucial to emphasize to our patients to avoid looking directly at the sun during an eclipse, even when it appears mostly covered.

To safeguard against eye damage, recommend the use of specially designed solar filters, such as eclipse glasses or handheld solar viewers. These filters should

comply with the ISO 12312-2 safety standard, blocking out harmful ultraviolet (UV) and infrared (IR) radiation, as well as intense visible light.

Advise patients to obtain filters from reputable sources to ensure authenticity, and to inspect them for any damage before use. Discourage the use of homemade filters like sunglasses, unfiltered cameras, CDs or exposed film, as these do not provide sufficient protection against solar radiation.

Educate patients on the proper use of solar filters. Emphasize the importance of putting the filters on before looking at the sun, and of keeping them on throughout the entire duration of the eclipse. Removing the filters, even for a moment, can result in immediate harm to the eyes.

Children, being naturally curious, may need extra supervision during eclipses. They might not fully comprehend the risks involved, so encourage parents to educate kids about eye safety and provide proper filters or alternative safe viewing methods.

As eye care professionals, we play a crucial role in promoting eye safety during eclipses. Ensuring that patients are aware of the risks associated with direct sun observation and advocating for the use of certified solar filters will safeguard their long-term eye health. Reputable sources such as eclipsecanada.ca or eclipse2024.org give comprehensive and accurate information.

Properly educating the public, including children and their parents, about the risks and precautions involved will ensure that everyone can enjoy the spectacle safely. Let us prioritize eye health and safety, making these eclipses an unforgettable and visually secure experience for all. **OP**

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Trend Watch

How to identify trends in your business, understand what is driving them, and react accordingly

BY NANCY DEWALD

Lead Up Training and Consulting

Atrend is a general development or change in a situation. When it comes to identifying trends in your business, there are several key points to consider.

Here are some suggestions:

1 Define relevant metrics: Start by identifying the key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics that are most relevant to your business, depending on where you are in your business cycle. These could include sales figures, customer acquisition rates, website traffic, conversion rates, customer retention rates, social media engagement, or any other metrics that align with your goals. Consider what is important to your customers.

Ask yourself questions such as: What are your customers buying? What problems are they trying to solve? What features or services are they asking for? By closely examining customer feedback and behaviours, you can identify emerging patterns and anticipate future needs.

2 Monitor changes over time: Analyze your business metrics over different time periods to identify trends. Look for consistent patterns, upward or downward trends, or any significant deviations from the norm.

I always suggest measuring the last three-month period and then compare it to the same time last year. By examining



changes over time, you can detect emerging trends and spot areas for improvement. This is also a way to measure if changes or actions you have put in place are effective, so you know what to do more or less of.

3 Compare metrics to industry benchmarks: Benchmark your metrics against industry standards or competitors to gain valuable insights. This allows you to understand how your business is performing relative to others in your sector. If you notice significant differences, it could indicate areas where you need to adjust or capitalize on untapped opportunities.

Numbers do not always tell you the whole story, but they certainly tell you where to look and dig a little deeper.

4 Conduct data segmentation: Break down your metrics into different segments to uncover hidden trends. Analyze data by customer demographics, geographic locations, product lines, or any other relevant categories. This approach can help you identify specific trends within different segments of your business and target your strategies accordingly.

5 Analyze correlations and causations: Look for correlations between different metrics to gain deeper insights. For example, you may notice that when staff productivity per hour is too high, your capture rate goes down. Analyzing is important, but more important is the “so what” – so what does this mean and what should you do with this information? In this example, it means your staff cannot keep up with the customer demand and they are missing opportunities.

What should/could you do:

- Determine the best productivity range for your office.
- Adjust the schedule or staffing to ensure that staffing levels are appropriate.
- If staffing is difficult, look to tasks that could be automated or outsourced.
- Schedule non-customer tasks before or after opening hours.
- Cross-train staff.

In closing, a word of caution: Once you start down this path of analyzing data, you can fall prey to a serious condition that I call ‘analysis paralysis.’ To avoid this, choose a maximum of two metrics at a time, then set goals, build a strategy to implement them, train, coach and monitor. **OP**

Coaching Tip:

We often focus on the desired results and believe this will change the behaviour. Instead, focus on the behaviours to impact the results.

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.



Optimizing Your Contact Lens Business

BY BRENDAN ELLIS, Marketing4ECPs

The contact lens industry is becoming more and more competitive, with online retailers and local competitors adapting to the changing demands of an increasingly digital healthcare space.

Adapting to the latest technology and consumer behaviours can help you compete by offering convenient patient care options and efficient processes to market, sell and ship your products to your customers.

Here are three tips to help optimize your contact lens business and set your practice apart.

1. ADOPT VIRTUAL CARE & TELEHEALTH

During the pandemic, your patients got used to taking care of their business virtually. That trend has stuck around, with telehealth and online shopping becoming popular options for many people.

By May 2021, 88% of consumers said they had taken advantage of telehealth

services during the pandemic, according to a McKinsey survey. Patients cited convenience and a satisfactory experience as perks of an online visit.

Transitions' *Five Trends for the Optical Industry in 2023* report encourages ECPs to continue to adopt a hybrid care model, noting that many eye issues can be addressed through telehealth, while more urgent concerns can be triaged and referred to an in-person visit at the clinic.

Considering telehealth options for less complex appointments can help you reach a broader patient base. The convenience of these experiences can build stronger relationships with customers so they trust you and your practice the next time they need a contact lens consultation, comprehensive eye care or emergency services.

Telehealth can create an even more personalized experience for those patients who have shifted their priorities toward virtual health care.

2. MEET THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR VISUAL DISORDERS

As some visual diseases and disorders become more prevalent, patients will look for contact lenses to help correct their vision and address their symptoms.

Canada's contact lens market is expected to grow by 2.45% in volume from 2023 to 2028, according to a report from Triton Market Research. As more Canadians look to go frameless, you can meet the demand by offering specialty contact lenses that help treat eye conditions like refractive errors.

Myopia is projected to affect nearly 50% of the world's estimated population by 2050. Specialty contact lenses can help treat myopia, hyperopia, astigmatism, keratoconus, and other common eye conditions like dry eyes.

From soft and rigid contact lenses to daily disposables, ensure you offer the latest lenses to help manage and treat these growing concerns. With more and more patients researching services online, update your website to include your full menu of treatments.

Expanding your contact lens offerings and staying informed about the latest advancements in lens technology can help your practice remain at the forefront of innovative solutions to your patients' visual needs.

3. SET UP YOUR ONLINE CONTACT LENS STORE

With more and more customers – and competitors – moving into the online space, having a streamlined and eye-catching online contact lens store can help your patients easily order the products they need with their exact prescription.

By 2025, nearly 78% of Canadians are projected to be e-commerce shoppers, according to the United States International Trade Administration.



Furthermore, 42% of customers who started using digital optometry services during the pandemic – including ordering prescriptions and home delivery – planned to keep using those services, the 2021 McKinsey survey showed.

And an additional 15% were interested in trying out digital options.

You can easily set up an online contact lens store or collaborate with another company to create an exceptional online experience for your patients.

Sites like Shopify and Square-space offer website creation options, but there are also e-commerce platforms specifically designed for ECPs, such as Otto Optics.

These eye care-focused sites can help you sell contact lenses and other optical

products online with direct shipping. You can often integrate these services with your suppliers for easy order fulfillment and embed your online store directly on your existing website.

4. EMBRACE DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

By adapting to the changing needs of consumers and staying informed about industry trends and advancements, you can provide exceptional eye care solutions and strengthen your relationships with patients. In doing so, you'll fortify your position as a trusted and innovative eye care practice, ready to meet the challenges and opportunities of the evolving contact lens market. **OP**

Brendan Ellis is a content writer and copy editor at Marketing4ECPs. Find out more about Brendan and Marketing4ECPs at marketing4ecps.com.



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