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Vision Now magazine is published by Peekay Publishing Ltd for The PK National Eyecare Group Ltd, the UK's largest purchasing group for independent opticians.



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Editor's comment



As 2019 draws to a close, practices up and down the country will perhaps be setting aside some quiet time to take stock of the year just passed and contemplate what 2020 might bring. Some may be starting to think about retirement, others may be considering new and additional revenue streams, further qualifications or branching out altogether. Whatever direction that you, and your business, is headed, rest assured that NEG is here to help.

In this month's Developing Thoughts, Phil Mullins shares some pointers for those thinking about retirement – now, soon and further down the line. As Phil suggests, the best succession plans are those laid out as far in advance as possible. So, even if you intend to continue practising for a good decade or more yet, it would be well worth including succession planning in your ongoing business strategy.

This month's NEG Business Club feature focuses on general tips for successful practice, shared by practitioners running some of the best-performing independent practices in the country. Each tip is linked to a handy tool in the NEG Business Club online portal, with templates that can be downloaded and personalised with your practice logo and contact details.

If you're heading to 100% Optical next month, you'll find many of NEG's preferred suppliers in attendance, including Optinet who will be showcasing eGOS integration with the Flex practice management system and its free e-Signature app. The London show will kick off a year of optical celebrations marking 2020 – the year of optics – so we hope to bump into you at an event soon. In the meantime, on behalf of the *Vision Now* team, have a peaceful, relaxing festive season – and we'll see you again in February 2020.

Nicky Collinson

Editor

The Editor welcomes letters, articles and other contributions for publication in the magazine and reserves the right to amend them. Any such contribution, whether it bears the author's name, initials or pseudonym, is accepted on the understanding that its author is responsible for the opinions expressed in it and that its publication does not imply that such opinions are those of The PK National Eyecare Group Ltd. Articles submitted for publication should be original, unpublished work and are accepted on the basis that they will not be published in any other journal. Acceptance of material for publication is not a guarantee that it will be included in any particular issue. Copyright © 2019 by Peekay Publishing Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying and recording, without the written permission of the publishers. Such written permission should also be obtained before any part of this publication is stored in a retrieval system of any nature.

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1 Seed International



Adrian James

Seed International has welcomed Adrian James as its new UK sales manager. With more than 10 years of experience in the contact lens industry, Adrian will oversee Seed's expansion into the UK after its acquisition of UltraVision in 2018. Adrian said: "I'm excited to be joining the Seed International team at a key time in its UK launch. UltraVision, together with the ambition of Seed, bring a new dimension to UK practitioners and patients alike."

Joining Adrian will be Harminder Matharu as Seed's newly appointed area business development manager. Harminder will play a key role in growing Seed's sales among UK practitioners, focusing on the company's disposable range including the newly launched Seed 1dayPure moisture for Astigmatism.



Harminder Matharu

2 CooperVision



How a -3.00D child might see in the science lab

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved CooperVision's myopia control contact lens, MiSight 1 day, making it the first and only FDA-approved product clinically proven to slow the progression of myopia when initially prescribed for children aged eight to 12 years old, when compared to children in a control group wearing a single vision one-day contact lens. MiSight (omafilcon A) daily wear single use soft contact lenses are indicated for the correction of myopic ametropia and for slowing the progression of myopia in children with non-diseased eyes, who at the initiation of treatment are eight to 12 years of age and have a refraction of -0.75D to -4.00D (spherical equivalent) with $\leq 0.75D$ of astigmatism.

MiSight 1 day will launch in the US as part of a CooperVision myopia management initiative beginning in March 2020. Already available in the UK and elsewhere, a range of tools are available to support practitioners in prescribing them. These include a new vision simulator, which can be found in the clinical resources section of the company's website. The tool helps demonstrate to parents how their myopic children see their surroundings in a variety of settings like the classroom, and how this can change as their myopia increases.

3 General Optical Council



"Biggest shake-up of education" on its way

The last stage is divided into three tranches to accommodate providers' needs and will begin in September 2022 and conclude in September 2024.

Gareth Hadley, GOC chair, said: "This is a historically significant decision marking the biggest shake up of optical education for over 35 years. The certainty that this timetable provides will assist all of us, including educational establishments themselves, to begin the process of implementation. We will continue to engage with the sector as we elaborate the details, but there is no turning back, these reforms will happen. This work, alongside our CET Review, will ensure both new and old registrants are equipped for opportunities and challenges that could not have been imagined when the current system was designed."

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72 YEARS' OPTICAL LENS MANUFACTURE

4 Association of British Dispensing Opticians



Clive Marchant

The Association of British Dispensing Opticians (ABDO) has written to the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) to express its “grave concerns” over the way in which the General Optical Council (GOC) is conducting its Education Strategic Review (ESR). Commenting, ABDO president, Clive Marchant, said: “The ESR continues to give us great concern regarding the process and the lack of transparency, consultation and the changes of direction of the work during the review. The GOC has demonstrated at various stages that it has a clear lack of knowledge of the eye health care services that dispensing opticians and contact lens opticians [CLOs] provide to the public.

“Our concerns are of such magnitude that we have made the unprecedented decision to express our grave concerns to the PSA, which is conducting a performance review of the GOC. We have also written to the GOC chief executive expressing our concerns regarding the make-up of its newly-formed ESR expert advisory groups, in particular the dispensing optician group, which is not truly representative of the profession. The GOC also has no EAG for CLOs, who have a specific skill set and separate competences set by the GOC.” Clive added that the Association was doing all it could “to ensure that the education of dispensing opticians remains to the highest standards, and that our scope of practice is recognised and permitted to develop”.

7 Federation of Manufacturing Opticians

From 2021, Optrafair will become a two-day, mid-week event to be held at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. The changes were outlined by the Federation of Manufacturing Opticians (FMO) during two Optrafair Transformation meetings held recently at the new venue. The meetings

5 Charmant



25-year bond to continue

The Charmant Group has renewed its licensing cooperation with the global fashion brand Esprit. Celebrating their silver anniversary as business partners this year, the companies’ 25-year association has brought stylish, top quality optical and sun frames to fashion lovers the world over.

“We are very proud of this 25 year journey and look forward to many more years ahead,” said Charmant CEO and president, Masao Miyachi. “The success of our bond is down to the intrinsic guiding principles of both Charmant and Esprit: we always put the needs of our customers, high product quality, style and value for money at the forefront of our strategy.”

6 Marchon

Lacoste has evolved its signature L.12.12 theme adding a new sunglass style featuring an innovative mask frame. The new L.12.12 sunglasses, available from Marchon, are characterised by a fluid single-lens construction, which is offered in adult and junior versions. The wide-front mask shape is crafted from durable injected plastic and set with flush polycarbonate lenses to ensure clear vision.

Embellished with a complex Petit Piqué pattern drawn from the iconic L.12.12 polo shirt, the ‘twins’ version is enhanced with the same features as the adult style offered with a textile croc logo. The style is available in Matte Black, Matte Green, Matte Blue, Matte Red, Matte Grey and Matte Pink for adults; and in Blue, Green and Black for children.



Family affair with new Lacoste style

included an exhibitor tour, showcasing all the facilities available, with the dates for the 2021 and 2022 shows also confirmed as being 21-22 April and 23-24 March respectively.

FMO chairman, Andy Yorke, said: “We received overwhelming support earlier this year from FMO members, optical trade bodies and membership organisations to

develop Optrafair. We have therefore demonstrated our long-term commitment to make Optrafair the premier optical exhibition and conference. Optrafair 20/20 will be our last at the NEC and because of the year 2020, it will be a massive celebration of optics and all things optical. It promises to be a fantastic farewell to the NEC, which has hosted Optrafair for more than 20 years.”

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8 De Rigo



New Police x Lewis Hamilton

De Rigo UK will be returning to 100% Optical 2020 next month to launch its brand new Police x Lewis Hamilton optical and sunglasses collection. The company's stand at W90 will feature a special Lewis Hamilton Bar, hosting a celebratory Happy Hour on Sunday 26 January at 2pm – with all NEG members warmly invited.

All of De Rigo's new ranges will be showcased including Police, Police x Lewis, Mulberry, Furla, Lozza, Carolina Herrera, Fila, Chopard, Dunhill and Nina Ricci. There'll be exclusive promotions and discounts during the three-day show at London ExCeL. *Turn to page 22 to learn more about all the new collections.*

11 Positive Impact

Glasklar is launching two new lens cleaner bottle colours at 100% Optical next month, bringing the number of colours in the range to 12. The company's 2019 green campaign is also being extended, which means that a tree will be planted for every Glasklar order made at the London show. The campaign began on World Environmental Day (5 June) with trees being planted by the Earth Day Network across the world to highlight that more than 15 billion trees are lost each year on earth.

So far, more than 60 trees have been planted in the charity campaign for Glasklar. The main focus for this year's World Environmental Day was Beat Plastic

9 Dunelm Optical



Joseph Duke Sun in Translucent Amber

The Joseph prescription sun collection from Dunelm is a premium unisex range with a strong core of luxury and quality, Parisian designed and handmade in Italy. The inclusion of colour dipped tips, bold details, contemporary styles and unique design nuances lend an individuality to the range of 14 prescription sun frames, each offering three colour options.

Oliver Beaumont, CEO for Dunelm Optical, said: "We are thrilled with the latest Joseph collection of prescription sunglasses. The range is very current and offers ultramodern design and contemporary style as you would expect from a luxury, world renowned fashion label." Every sun frame comes with a Joseph embossed case and cloth.

10 Association of British Dispensing Opticians

The Association of British Dispensing Opticians (ABDO) has appointed Debbie McGill as its new head of policy and public affairs. Debbie has worked in optical policy for 12 years and has been ABDO policy and public affairs officer since February 2018. She said: "I'm really pleased to accept this new position within ABDO. I will continue to deliver the policy aims and objectives to maintain, promote and develop the DO workforce, by identifying opportunities in line with service pathways and patient need."



Debbie McGill



Return to 100% Optical

Pollution, which also ties in with the #RefillNotLandFill message of patients

reusing the Glasklar bottles rather than wasting plastic. Find out more at stand E83.

COCO MINT

SUNWEAR

12 100% Optical



View the practice of the future

Visitors to 100% Optical next month will see how the practice of tomorrow might look in the new and improved Future Practice Hub. Sponsored by Luneau Technology, Zeiss, Birmingham Optical, Charmant and Johnson and Johnson Vision, the Hub will show how practices will be able to evolve in the coming years from a clinical, regulatory and professional perspective, via a consulting room, diagnostic suite and dispensing area.

In each area, tailored CET content in the consulting room, diagnostic suite and dispensing area will be delivered through discussion and hands-on skills workshops on subjects including: artificial intelligence and clinical management, the future of imaging, and lessons from overseas. "The improved Future Practice Hub, new Love Eyewear Awards and Love Eyewear Week are just some of the exciting elements of a show that gets better and busier every year," said Nathan Garnett, 100% Optical's show director.

14 International Eyewear



Urban street style by Humphrey's

13 Marchon



Lanvin sunglasses on the Paris catwalk

Marchon Eyewear has entered into an exclusive, long-term global licensing agreement for sun and optical eyewear under the Lanvin brand name. The first men's and women's eyewear collections developed under the partnership will be released globally in September 2020 – with a capsule collection comprised of four sunglasses to be previewed in March 2020. Marchon recently collaborated with Lanvin's creative director, Bruno Sialelli, to develop and manufacture sunglasses for the Lanvin spring 2020 runway show in Paris.

Five new releases in the Humphrey's collection from International Eyewear have been designed for the expressive spectacles wearer. Known for its individuality and creative flair, the Humphrey's brand has taken its 2019 autumn/winter style cue from urban street style. Embracing design diversity – from original and classic to fashionable and trend-orientated – there's the promise of something for everyone.

Models 582293, 582294 and 582295 are three adapted fashion styles for everyday life. Combining workwear with retro flair, the styles experiment with panto and cat-eye shapes, lightweight stainless steel and matt spray colours. Coloured hinges and co-ordinating laminated tip ends add brand signature to the styles.

15 Association of Optometrists



On the campaign trail

The Association of Optometrists (AOP) got behind Road Safety Week last month by encouraging practitioners to share its *Don't swerve a sight test* campaign resources. The AOP's most recent Voice of Optometry survey findings revealed an increase in the number of motorists being asked to stop driving because of the risk they posed to themselves and others – up two per cent on 2018.

Thirty-seven per cent of optometrists surveyed had seen as many as two patients in the previous month who continued to drive despite being told their vision was below the legal standard. Optometrist and AOP head of clinical and regulatory, Henry Leonard, said: "What many might perceive as a small increase is deeply disappointing and has frightening consequences. We are seeing a rise in the number of people who have a disregard for how important good vision is for driving ability and it's impacting the safety of the individuals who use our roads."

16 Essilor

The Essilor Group has been awarded the title of Diversity Leader 2020 by the *Financial Times*, recognised in the publication's new annual ranking of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The Group is listed 62nd out of a total of 10,000 companies scanned as part of this first-of-its-kind ranking, which assesses companies' success in promoting all types of diversity.

Laurent Vacherot, CEO of Essilor, declared: "Diversity has been a key value for Essilor from the very beginning, shaping both our culture and identity and contributing to our continued success. For us, promoting diversity and inclusion is not only an ethical obligation, it is also one of our fundamental convictions: to achieve our ambition to provide better vision and protection to 7.7 billion people on the planet, we need a full diversity of talents."

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17 Louis Stone



Supporting students across the country

Louis Stone held an optical exhibition at the University of Hertfordshire recently, showcasing colourful Volk lenses, Oculus UB 4 and UB 6 trial frames and other essential pieces. "The team were completely inundated with students," said Louis Stone head of marketing and communications, Clare Gaba. "Many had really interesting background stories – such as someone who went into optometry from civil engineering and another who had decided upon optometry after a background in tiling." The company held a raffle for a £50 Louis Stone voucher and the lucky winner was Jason Cherry.

The company also recently visited Cardiff University's Optometry Department to present two student awards. Samrath Hans was presented with a Louis Stone certificate and prize for Preliminary Year Best Performance 2018-2019, while Scott Cox won a Best Performance in Year 2 2018-2019 Louis Stone certificate and prize. Scott is pictured receiving his prize from Louis Stone MD Paul Gaba, with Professor John Wild looking on.

20 Mid-Optic

Optishield, the flexible hands-free alternative for use when conducting visual assessments, is now available from Mid-Optic. The British product is made of soft medical grade silicone, and fits neatly on to the spectacle lens as an alternative to

18 Norville



New interpretation of iconic style

Norville's new Duck & Cover aviator model has been designed to truly reflect the look, feel and trend of the brand. "As one of the most iconic frame styles, aviators have become a mark of distinction for many men and women around the world," said company founder, Frank Norville. "A classic staple for decades, the aviator is a fantastic option when choosing your preferred style of glasses. Ones that not only protect your eyes, but enhance your lifestyle. And skilfully sized for prescription lenses." The Duck & Cover interpretation presents the classic aviator in a three-colour combination of black, gold and silver with milled edge rims and sturdy designed American joints.

19 International Opticians Association



Six nights in Bangkok

The International Opticians Association (IOA) is holding its 33rd biannual conference in Thailand from 7-13 June 2020, with delegates also having the chance to visit Silmo Bangkok. IOA president, Fiona Anderson, said: "Our time together will be filled with fun, education, engagement, learning and some exciting visits. Take part in this summit to discover a renewed vigour for the fulfilled life in optics that we all share."

The summit includes a full day at Silmo Bangkok, including VIP access to the opening ceremony, a networking lunch and a cocktail reception as well as an educational afternoon at the Silmo Academy. There is an active IOA social and activity programme planned including a celebratory farewell dinner and presidential handover at the Vertigo restaurant with panoramic views across Bangkok. Find out more visit www.ioassn.org/iaa-summit

occluder paddles. "Knowing the Optishield is sitting securely in place gives the optometrist the confidence to concentrate on the test taking place instead of the positioning of the occluder," said Richard Hardy, Mid-Optic sales and marketing director. "A frosted option may be particularly suited to younger patients, or those suffering with intractable diplopia."



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21 Essilor



“Business as usual” – responds Essilor MD, Tim Precious

Following last month’s An Independent View column, ‘Having their cake and eating it?’, *Vision Now* offered Essilor the ‘right to reply’. Managing director, Tim Precious, responded: “Membership organisations like the AIO will understandably always seek to lobby in the interest of the independents, but let me seek to reassure them and readers that since the news about the potential acquisition of GrandVision, Essilor and I are doubly committed to our independent partners.

“We hope our independent partners have recognised that it’s been business as usual from Essilor. We are driven to support independents, we strive to segment them from the rest of the market with unique independent-only products and equipment which we believe will help to future proof them. In fact Essilor always tries to be so much more than a ‘product supplier’. We are product designers, innovators and manufacturers.

“In November we launched our Advanced Vision Accuracy [AVA] lenses, which allow independents to prescribe lenses to 0.01D, which when coupled with our Eyecode measurement creates a truly unique visual experience. Our bespoke team can often spend days each month training whole teams on this enhanced customer experience and it’s really working, helping to generate loyal customers along the way.

“We’ve recently been investing heavily in our digital media and marketing team to help find the best ways to help capture and signpost traffic to independents through optician-finder portals. We also believe independents could be more visible online and our expanding team can help exploit digital opportunities, like developing their own web presences as extensions of their own stores. This will help capture new customers and serve existing ones better with ‘drive to store’ digital solutions.

“We understand that one of the real challenges for independents is stimulating customer demand and targeting younger markets to capture new customers and we are focused on the task at hand to help them grow and increase footfall. Our retail focus is to do everything in our power to help the independent offer a better, richer experience for customers when they are in store, and online. So in our eyes it is ‘business as usual’ from Essilor.”

AN INDEPENDENT VIEW

Optometry apprenticeships

A move to introduce apprenticeships for optometry has met with a very mixed reaction. On the one hand, there are those who believe it could be a step towards ‘dumbing down’ the profession, but for others it’s a legitimate step forward to expand the envelope for entry and help to meet an increased projected demand for optometric services.

Against a backdrop of the increased number of optometry courses being offered by universities across the country, and the seeming influence of the multiples on the General Optical Council (GOC) Education Strategic Review (and the trailblazer group), it is easy to understand why there may be concern amongst many optometrists.

Indeed, during the panel session at the AIO/BABO conference in Bristol in October, delegates were asked if they were in favour of, or opposed to, the introduction of apprenticeships. The great majority were negative towards the proposal. There has been an online petition circulating, which opposes the introduction of apprenticeships, citing the successful resistance put up by pharmacists to the introduction of apprenticeships for their profession.

There are, however, those who believe that expanding access to the profession is a good thing and it does not follow that the GOC standards should in any way be diminished as a result. In fact, there is an argument that standards could be enhanced by the expanded practical experience that apprenticeships could bring – and an apprenticeship could offer a method of succession planning. What needs to be established is the expectations of teaching: how much is the practitioner expected to do in between their patients?

The most important thing for all optometrists, and in particular independents, is that their voice is heard, and this is best done by responding to the official consultation. Public bodies are obliged to take notice of responses to official consultations and publish the results. It is important that as many practitioners as possible feedback their views to the GOC.

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Developing thoughts



This month, Phil Mullins provides some useful guidance for successful succession planning

To the future and beyond

It is clear to all in optics that in a relatively short period of time, the UK optical market has changed dramatically. Even up until the early 1990s, independent practices made up the largest part of the market and when it came to retiring or moving on. Selling the practice would offer a good return; indeed, you could even sell the patient records. Yes, patients were loyal enough that a fee was demanded for their details. How things have changed. However, it's not all bad news for those who may be looking to retire; as with all previous generations, you simply need to adapt to the circumstances to make the most of the opportunities.

Like most things in life, it comes down to planning – or in this circumstance, succession planning. One of the major issues is that ECPs don't think far enough ahead and then have to make quick decisions, which are not necessarily the best. The best succession plans are at least acted over a five to 10-year time scale. I have even spoken to people who had the succession included in their original business plan at the start of their business. But regardless of your time scale, there are some points to consider.

SUCCESSION PLANNING POINTERS

Maximising the value. Quite often, you see someone moving towards retirement by reducing their hours and ceasing to invest in the business. Unfortunately, this can be a costly mistake. After all, who wants to buy a business with declining income and in need of a major investment to bring it up-to-date? Even if they are, the price will certainly reflect the work required to build the business to its former glory.

So, keep the testing going, even if you have to use locum coverage, then make sure you keep up with the paintwork, keep



Planning is key when it comes to moving on the fixtures in good order and replace anything that is broken. I wouldn't suggest doing a major refit before selling, as you'll never see a return for your money and it may restrict those looking to buy. It would certainly be worth you joining the NEG Business Club and working with the Practice Building team, to make sure you reach your business's full potential and maximise its value.

Don't look past the end of your nose. Before going out to the wider market, it really is worth looking at who is already working within the business. Not only do they know the ins and outs of the business, but they also have a vested interest in its future. Although they may not wish to purchase the business outright, they may be interested in buying a share. You may even find that you could continue to have a share holding in the business, bringing in extra income during retirement. This would also allow you to have an input into the future of the business you may well have spent decades developing.

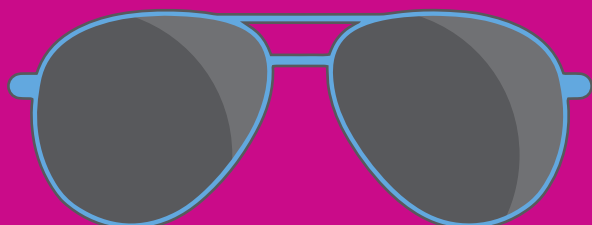
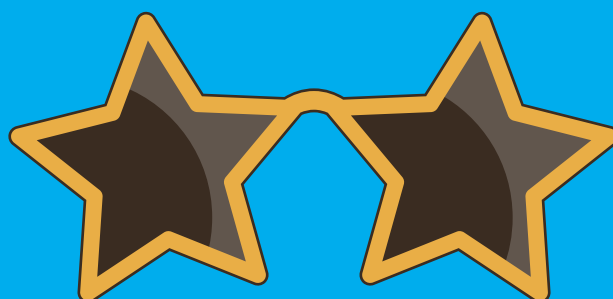
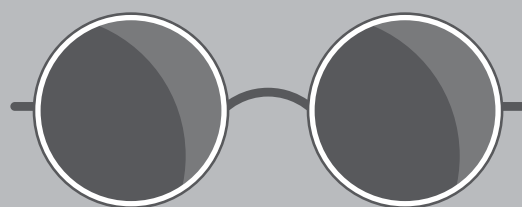
Look for a buy-in. If there isn't anyone currently in your practice looking to buy in, search outside for someone who is looking to become an independent. If you don't currently work with a dispensing optician, this could be a great time to begin working with one. More and more DOs are looking to become owners and by initially working in the practice, they could generate an income that will more than cover the additional costs.

Obviously, if you only have one consulting room, and you bring in a potential optometrist to buy into the business over a period, you will need to come to an agreement regarding testing days and payments. But, once again, the buy-in can be spread over a period, often increasing the total paid for the business or even leaving a residual share holding for you.

Go to the open market. Although there are several ways to sell a practice, from word of mouth, to using agents or even selling to a group, I would always recommend that you take legal advice and have a professional valuation. Even if you are selling to people within your business, it will save a lot of conflict later and keep everything on a business level. NEG is happy to recommend Myers La Roche to support you in this process. The company has years of experience and can help you through every step, even if you think it's going to be five or more years before you sell up.

Are there buyers out there? Although it might not seem like it from the reducing numbers of independents, there are buyers out there. Many of them are NEG members with very successful practices, who are looking to expand their portfolio. There is also an increasing number of ECPs who work for multiples who are interested in becoming independent. We have already started working with other organisations to develop pathways for this new generation of ECPs to start their journey.

So if you are thinking about your future, please contact me, in confidence, at p.mullins@nationaleyecare.co.uk. We would like to work with you in this next stage of your business, while supporting and nurturing the next generation of successful independent practitioners.



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Top tips for 2020



In this month's NEG Business Club feature, Andy Clark shares some tips for success from top-performing practices

At Practice Building, we are privileged to be working with the owners of some of the most successful practices in UK independent optics. In preparation for this article, I asked some of them what their top tips for running a growing practice in 2020 would be. This is what they said...

Stop relying on recall alone to fill your books

If you are still sending out letterheads with, "Dear Mr Clark, Our records indicate...blah blah blah", there are things that you can do to vastly improve the performance of your recall. With the exception of the 'worried well', more people seem happy to choose when they want to visit rather than turn up when we tell them that they need to.

Most practices we spoke to reported that they were sending fewer recall communications per patient, and were instead spending the money on sending other messages between eye exams. They did add, however, that there was no better way to fill tomorrow's gaps in the book than by calling the right patients with the right script.



Update your message with recall packs

NEG Business Club members: Teach your staff to keep your book full with training in the 7 Systems Toolbox System 2, and update your messages with Prêt Recall Packs.



Train your staff to send out festive incentives

Build a stronger relationship with your database

While recall is less effective, database marketing is proving to be a real winner for our clients. GDPR was seen by many as a threat, but those who look for opportunities instead of problems have realised that it is an excellent model for database marketing best practice.

The key is to offer a higher level of ongoing service and added value to people when they sign up to your free mailing list. Then send them invitations, information and incentives between eye exams to build a stronger bond between them and your practice. Send them invitations to open days featuring frames, contact lenses or your clinical specialities, invitations to call in and give their specs a little TLC and send them a Christmas incentive. When you build an ongoing relationship, they will reward you with their loyalty and purchase more often.

NEG Business Club members: See 7 Systems Toolbox System 3 and create your list with the Prêt More Campaign. For things to send, see Prêt TLC cards, Open Days and Pick your Present.

Actively attract new patients

Create a strategic marketing plan to actively encourage people to visit you for the first time. Carefully define the three or four core messages that set you apart from your competitors, that are also the most attractive to the people who live in your catchment area. Then embrace new and old media to repeatedly get the word out.

For most practices, the messages should demonstrate promises of excellence and value for money; note carefully though that value for money does not have to mean cheap or discount. Watch out for the danger signs of falling patient numbers coupled with rising average transaction values.



Create personalised, bespoke marketing plans

Merry Christmas

Get 2020 for
£2020

Pay for 12 months in advance and
Save £680!*

Get 12 months of full access to the most comprehensive and best supported business resource available for UK Independent Optics for just £2020!



Sign up before 25th December at:
PracticeBuilding.co.uk/NEG

*Compared to 12 monthly payments of £225 = £2700. Sign up must be completed before 25th December 2019.



Go the extra mile to make patients feel great

NEG Business Club members: Book a regular strategy call with your marketing coach. See the Practice Profile in the 7 Systems Toolbox System 1. Organise your campaigns in the Prêt Campaign library and use the bespoke creative services from the Practice Building Studio when required.

Offer an outstanding experience

A great customer experience is the thing that separates your practice from the internet, and prevents your replacement with artificial intelligence. But great experiences never happen by accident. Remember that what you make people feel is just as important as what you make. Create and actively manage systems to deliver a perfect experience at every step of the journey. Start collecting quality customer feedback and use it to refine your customer experience.

NEG Business Club members: See 7 Systems Toolbox System 4.

Recommend multiple pairs of specs

It's simply crazy that in the UK, very few people own multiple pairs compared to most of the rest of Europe. We have found that the two biggest reasons for this are: 1) the tendency to only recommend new pairs when there is a prescription change instead of for functional or style reasons; and 2) high spectacle prices meaning that people

see a new pair of glasses as a single purchase that has to last a long time.

Here are the three essentials for selling multiple pairs of spectacles:

1. **Multiple recommendations.** Explore what people might *want* as well as what they *need* – and whenever you get chance, advise people of all of the products and services that they might enjoy or benefit from. Then write them down, so they don't forget.

NEG Business Club members: Train all of your team to recommend online in the 7 Systems Toolbox System 5.

2. **Invitations.** Invite people back more often to give them the opportunity to make more purchases.

NEG Business Club members: See 'Offer an outstanding experience'.

3. **Affordability.** Practices with the highest transaction values also have the longest periods between purchases. Make sure that you also feature a collection of fabulous *and* affordable eyewear for all of those extra pairs.

NEG Business Club members: See Prêt Style 99.

Keep a close eye on your numbers

Our clients all agreed that they couldn't maintain their success without actively



Reach out with fabulous *and* affordable eyewear

managing business performance, particularly sales and gross profit. With volatility in prices from suppliers, it is essential that you review pricing policies frequently. Several have found that they had far more frames in stock than they needed.

NEG Business Club members: See 7 Systems System 6, Scorecard, Price Planner and Frame Stock Profile.

And finally, one tip from me:

Don't make New Year's resolutions. Make plans

From the tips given here, decide which ones you want to work on and prioritise them. Then go to work on one of them until you can say, 'Job done'. Only then start on the next.

We would be delighted to help all NEG members make plans for a great 2020. Just go to www.callpb.uk and book a complimentary, no obligation, 30-minute appointment with a Practice Building coach. Activate your free membership of the NEG Business Club at www.practicebuilding.co.uk/neg

Pushing the limits of design

De Rigo UK will showcase its entire brand portfolio of SS20 collections at 100% Optical next month



Police x Lewis Hamilton will be launched in London

De Rigo UK is delighted to announce its return to 100% Optical in January 2020 to launch its brand new Police x Lewis Hamilton optical and sunglasses collection. Alongside the new Lewis Hamilton range will be De Rigo's entire portfolio of spring/summer 2020 (SS20) brand eyewear collections. The portfolio offers a variety of designer names from affordable luxury, premium and lifestyle to sports including: Police, Mulberry, Furla, Lozza, Carolina Herrera, Fila, Chopard, Dunhill and Nina Ricci.

The company's stand W90 will feature a special Lewis Hamilton Bar, hosting a celebratory Happy Hour on Sunday 26 January at 2pm, with complimentary prosecco and canapes. The company will also offer visitors exclusive promotions and discounts during the show.

UNITING RACING AND FASHION

Uniting the worlds of fashion and racing, the collaboration between Police and Formula 1



Materials such as bio-acetate and titanium feature in the collection

legend Lewis Hamilton has created a spectacular collection of eyewear epitomising the concept of speed and design. The premium range, which made its worldwide debut at the Formula 1 Italian Grand Prix in September 2019, combines the pilot style and Police spirit with strong, iconic designs that bring together classical, retro-inspired shapes with fashion-forward trends.

Sustainability and function sit at the heart of the collection, which uses materials such as bio-acetate, titanium and rubber, picked for their efficiency. Retro inspired and premium in finish, Lewis Hamilton was involved in the design process of the range, whilst the advanced manufacturing process has allowed the De Rigo artisans to obtain an excellent level of refinement.

The personalised Lewis Hamilton logo and decorations, along with gold titanium and the iconic parallel lines pattern on the temples, provide the range with an impeccable look and feeling of quality. Each Police x Lewis Hamilton optical and

sunglass frame comes complete with a personalised case in black leather with a gold velvet interior, chosen by Lewis.

BRAND AMBASSADOR PARTNERSHIP

In addition to developing the collection with Lewis Hamilton, Police is also an official team supplier of Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport. Through this relationship, the drivers and their fellow team members have been enlisted as ambassadors of the brand's sunglasses and prescription frames. The Police logo is on both sides of the helmets of drivers Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas and in the pit garage, as well as appearing on the team's marketing activities.

Massimo De Rigo, executive vice president of the De Rigo Group, commented: "We are extremely proud of this prestigious collaboration between Police, our house brand which we value particularly, and Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport, the historic Formula 1 team. Our determination to work with Lewis as both a brand ambassador and designer presented a unique opportunity to join Police to the sports world once again, and we are proud to be partnering with the strongest team in one of the most popular sports in the world."

"It's great to welcome Police to Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport," said Toto Wolff, team principal and CEO of Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport. "We're delighted to partner with a brand that embodies high quality and attention to detail - two characteristics which are incredibly important



Police logo features on the helmets of F1 drivers

in our sport. This partnership demonstrates the growing interest of lifestyle brands in the team, which underlines the great appeal of Formula 1 as a marketing platform.”

As for Lewis Hamilton himself, he stated: “I’ve always had a thing for sunglasses, always looking for the next best pair. This is why Police as a brand really stood out, with its strong designs, which focus on both function and style. I’m continuously looking to learn and grow within the fashion industry, so the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with the Police’s creative team, make my mark on the design, all while learning the process behind the development of the sunglasses, was an offer I couldn’t pass up.

“It was great to see how our focuses really complemented each other,” Lewis continued. “We both have an obsession with pushing the boundaries and a fearless pursuit of perfection. Police is known for innovation within the industry, high quality products and attention to detail. It’s these elements that drew me in. Being able to work with a brand that continues to push the limits of design and function is a brand I want to learn from. Pushing the limits to evolve and grow is a philosophy of mine, one that inspires me to move forward and a value we share.”

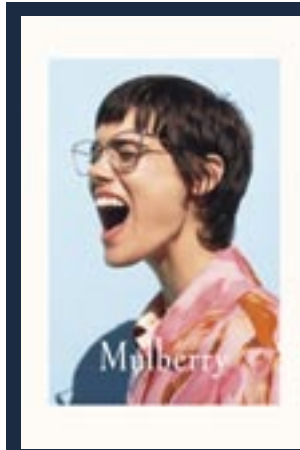
Launched in the 1980s as a De Rigo Group eyewear brand, Police now boasts a wide range of products, all of which stand out for the high quality of the materials used and for their consummately urban spirit.

MULBERRY: LUXURY BRITISH HERITAGE

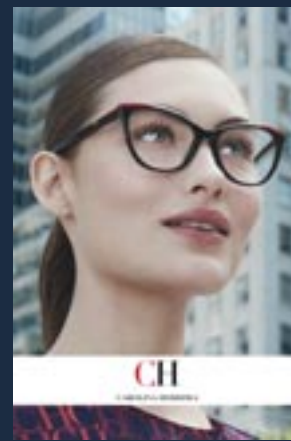
The first ever Mulberry Eyewear collection was launched by De Rigo UK at 100% Optical in January 2019, and the company will launch its SS20 release at the show for the second year running. Mulberry’s British heritage is re-interpreted with a modern-day twist, alternating variations of classic shapes with striking geometric expressions.

Amidst the various models, patterns and elements emblematic of leatherwear, shoes and jewellery emerge. This attention to detail and en vogue aspects, alongside the masterly use of iconic elements such as Mulberry Green and the Mulberry Tree, bestow inimitable exclusivity upon the product.

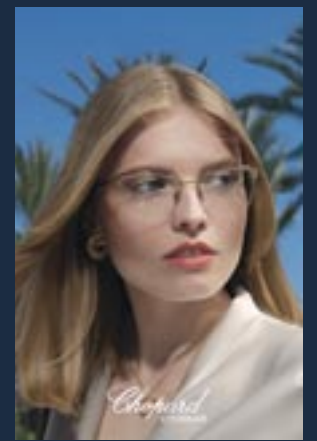
The combination of acetate and metal breathes life into eyewear models boasting excellent visibility, as well as highly wearable styles inspired by the 1950s. Expect to see stylish tartan patterns, Swarovski crystal detailing, handbag logo plate embellishments and gold chained temples, making for truly on-trend looks.



Many Mulberry styles are inspired by the 1950s



Bold interpretation of the iconic CH stripes pattern



Leading the way in luxury eyewear

CAROLINA HERRERA: ICONIC, CHIC AND CLASSIC

After designing the wedding dress of Caroline Kennedy, Carolina Herrera fast became recognised for her stunning designs and couture creations. Over the next 20 years, her eye for detail and passionate vision has made her one of the most successful designers in the world, having designed dresses for Michelle Obama, Kate Middleton, Meghan Markle and many more iconic names.

Carolina Herrera’s designs offer a chic, well-heeled style, along with a sense of classic feminine sensibility for her devoted base of female clients. The new SS20 range to be introduced at 100% Optical imbues the eyewear with the feminine and joyfully elegant spirit of the brand. Contemporary influences and a vintage mood interweave, enriched by distinctive elements and interlaced lines and colours.

The multiple applications range from transparent acetates with matching oversized cosmetic lenses, to exclusive pairings and colour combinations, in addition to bold interpretations of the iconic Carolina Herrera stripes pattern. The balance in shapes and details has been fashioned to meet the needs of women who seek original premium-quality details of accessible sumptuousness. The new range is complete with the brand’s beloved Carolina Herrera Petite Collection, encapsulating pretty styles for the most petite of faces.

CHOPARD: REFINED CRAFTSMANSHIP

With a history dating back to 1860, this celebrated company designs some of the finest jewellery in the world, carefully setting the most beautiful of diamonds and precious stones. De Rigo Vision and Chopard have worked closely together for over a decade, creating beautiful eyewear reflective of the jewellery Chopard is recognised for.

Celebrating the luxury of high jewellery mixed with Italian design, each refined Chopard frame accentuates the most graceful of ladies’ personal style with luxurious, feminine frames presented in arrays of tints, finished with luxurious, sparkling stones.

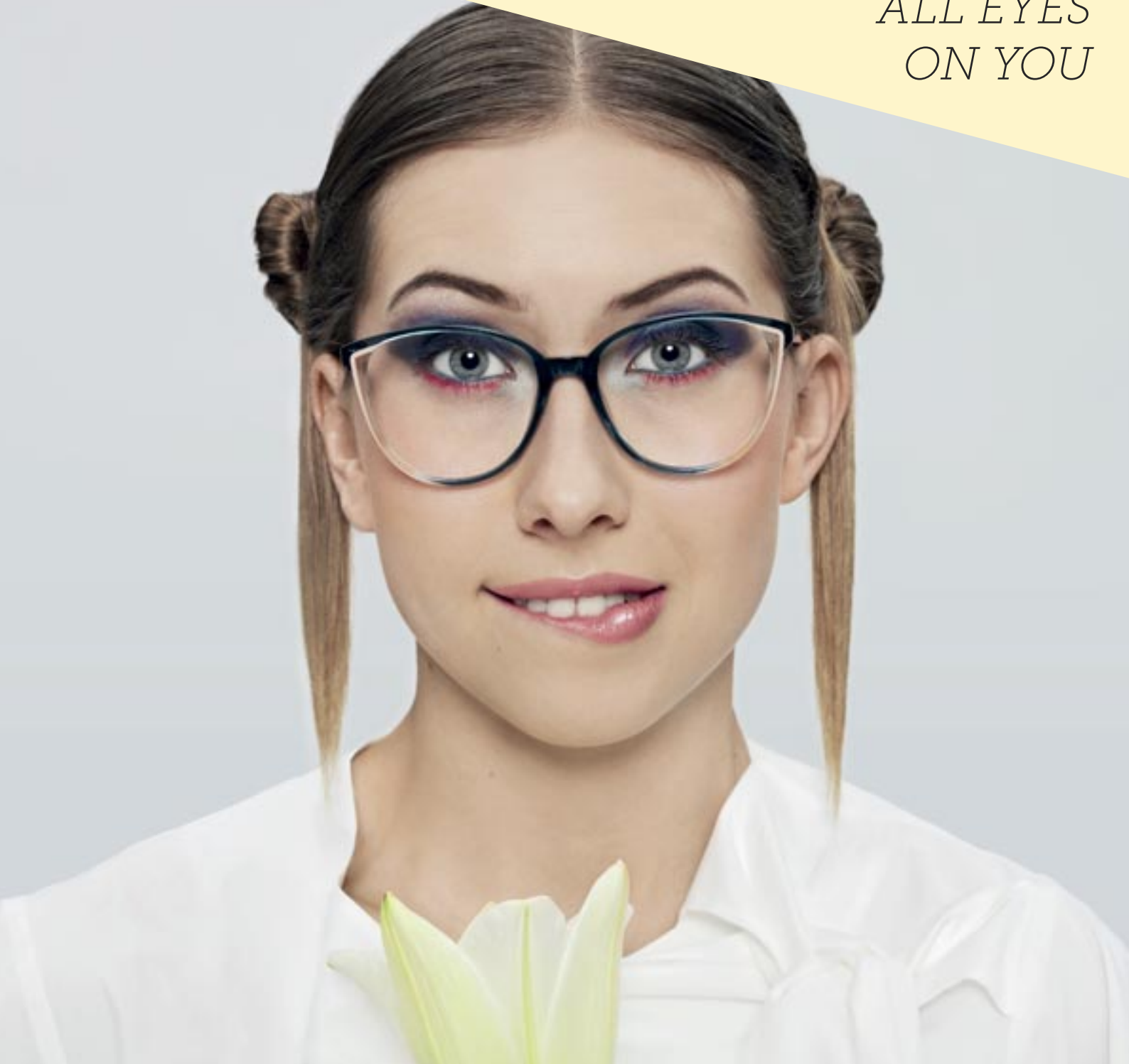
The Chopard 2020 collection is the epitome of two fundamental principles that characterise the celebrated Swiss Maison of High Jewellery: technological innovation and fine manufacturing. The choice of materials and ornate details that recall Chopard’s most iconic jewellery lines render this new collection both contemporary and glamorous, whilst maintaining the exceptionally high quality standards expected from De Rigo Vision.

Titanium is pressed to create lightweight yet more fashion-forward frames, while the textured detailing on the sides transform into ‘spoilers’ denoting a younger and more edgy style, with double-mirrored and palm-shape mirrored lenses re-establishing a connection with the renowned red carpet.

Chopard is arguably the most luxurious designer eyewear name in the industry, with De Rigo proudly performing 15 quality controls on each pair of hand crafted Chopard glasses. All Chopard frames are involved in a painstaking manufacturing process, with every pair of prescription glasses being 23kt gold plated, with 30 minutes spent on the gold plating of each frame. Just one person assembles a pair of Chopard glasses from the beginning to the end; produced in a dedicated production island where each operator is responsible for the entire process of producing and manufacturing the glasses.

Visit De Rigo’s stand W90 at 100% Optical for exclusive offers and Happy Hour to celebrate the launch of Police x Lewis Hamilton.

ALL EYES
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kiotonakamura
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Sunwise Rx Sports vision for all



Providing solutions for all sports



Established in the sports market since 1996, eyewear specialist Sunwise offers an affordable and bespoke range of sports prescription eyewear that caters to the gap in the sports vision market. Delivering a practical solution for sports prescription eyewear through innovation and new technology, Sunwise is able to make sports vision available for all.

Sunwise has been established in the sports market for more than 20 years, and is known for its lightweight, wraparound frames, affordable prices and high quality products that aid sporting performance. During the last 20 years, the brand has become well known in the running, cycling, golf, cricket and outdoor markets – establishing itself as a true sports vision expert.

In terms of the optical market, the brand has been supporting the profession for the

last 10 years, providing new technologies and constantly innovating the range to provide both practitioner and patient with “the best products on the market”. Over the last 10 years, the brand has listened to the demands of patients and practitioners to create a diverse range of models that can appeal to all. In 2019 alone, the brand has further innovated its products to include models that come with inserts, easy-to-glaze gaskets or eight curve based models that can be directly glazed.

By working with athletes, stockists and its loyal consumer base, Sunwise has been able to recognise the gaps in the market and provide high quality products at affordable prices. Through this constant communication with ‘real people’ in the sports market, the company grows with each trend and establishes itself as ‘true’ sports vision experts.

COMPLETE PACKAGE

For NEG members, Sunwise is offering a complete prescription pack including eight models that cover all the bases for sports vision. The pack includes models that come with ready-to-glaze inserts that can be managed by dispensing opticians, easy-to-glaze models that come with six curve prescription gaskets that can also be managed by dispensing opticians, and finally eight curve sports models that can be ordered through its partnered lab.

The Sunwise Rx range provides practitioners with an affordable and practical solution to bespoke sports prescription eyewear needs. The beauty of the Sunwise Rx range is its versatility, with many of the models coming with a ready-to-glaze insert, gaskets or the option of directly glazing a patient’s prescription to the back of the lenses.



Focus on lightweight, wraparound, affordable sports eyewear





sunwise **RX**[®]
VISION FOR WINNING



For more information email sunwiseRx@tgsports.co.uk or call 07899 727671

#outstandinglybritish



www.sunwise.co.uk

The Rx range concentrates on the cornerstones of the brand, offering an affordable and practical solution for those who require sports prescription eyewear. Conforming to the highest standards in the market, the range allows practitioners to provide fit-for-purpose eyewear based on a patient's requirements that will leave them completely satisfied with the service.

Sports vision is a growing niche market that has real potential for all practices. Sport in the UK is increasingly growing in popularity and sports prescription eyewear is becoming an essential piece of equipment. For sports enthusiasts and athletes that require a prescription, there are not many options on the market to help deliver their sports vision needs.

The Sunwise Rx system offers a range of models that can cater to multiple sports and different requirements, and is the ideal entry point into sports vision for all practices. After working with its partner lab, Waterside Optical Lab, the packs come with an easy-to-follow matrix for a complete prescription service. The core range of models has been carefully selected to offer products for all sports and cover every possible need a patient might have. The simplicity of the pack is what makes entering the sport vision market that much more approachable.

Patients have often strayed away from sports vision eyewear due to many of the brands on the market charging exceedingly high prices. If this wasn't the case then they were simply unable to find a model that meets their requirements. The exclusive-to-opticians Rx range makes sports vision much more affordable to patients.

BENEFITS AND PRACTICAL USES

Prescription sunglasses are not only limited to sports; for many they are required for normal day-to-day life. As days get shorter this



Cycling with Sunwise

winter, sunglasses are required for driving early in the mornings to provide a clearer view and block glare coming from the sun and reflections from other cars. A high volume of drivers require prescription sunglasses.

With the Sunwise Rx system, you are able to offer your patients a quick and affordable option for sports vision thanks to the inclusive insert that comes with the models included in the pack. The inserts are easy to glaze and will appeal to patients that do not want to break the bank when purchasing a pair of sports prescription eyewear. The additional benefit of the inclusive Rx insert is also appealing to contact lens wearers. The Rx insert can be easily removed or added to the glasses for when the patient wishes to wear contact lenses under their sunglasses.

For patients who choose to have their eyewear directly glazed, the Sunwise Rx system offers an affordable solution that can be delivered to the highest standards with a very quick turnaround. Working together with Waterside, the Rx system comes with a detailed price list for all possible options for each of the models as well as an RRP you can provide your patient with. The matrix is easy to follow and simplifies the whole process of providing sports vision.

When it comes to sports, there are many different requirements a patient might have and these can also depend on the time of



Award-winning product design

year or location. Some models included come with sets of interchangeable lenses that can easily be swapped whilst on the go. For many practitioners, this is a great selling point for sports such as running and cycling that are participated in all year round; a patient may require a clear lens to act as a shield to debris and the environment without reducing their vision.

If a patient requires their prescription to be directly glazed to the back of the lens, they have a few more options available to them. For instance, if they are into water sports or like to fish then you can recommend polarised lenses to eliminate glare. Maybe your patient plays golf, in which case you can recommend a photochromic lens. This will allow their eyewear to adapt to their environment over a long period of time and means they can also be worn in the summer months. Sports vision is a very accessible market that offers opticians a great opportunity to grow.

SUMMARY

Sunwise is fully committed to working with NEG members to help them move into this growing market and offer a bespoke service to all of their patients. The Rx range has been specifically designed to meet all possible needs with the highest quality products at affordable prices. The pack comes with everything you will need to get started and maximise your sales performance.

To summarise, the Sunwise Rx system offers all of these great benefits:

- British designed bespoke sports prescription range
- Affordably priced high quality products
- A range of eight sunglasses to meet the different needs of patients
- The choice of ready-to-glaze inserts, easy-to-glaze gaskets and direct glazing onto lenses
- Complete Rx pricelist and matrix with suggested RRP's included
- Dedicated support from Sunwise Rx team

View the range at www.sunwise.co.uk and contact Sunwise on 01865 714620.



Supporting team sporting events

Swiss sovereignty: EYEWEAR PERFECTION

By Joan Grady

Thoughts of Switzerland might immediately bring to mind beautifully designed watches, majestic mountains, delicious cheeses, tennis maestro Roger Federer, and the iconic Swiss Army knife. What might not be an instant connection is innovative eyewear with dynamic creativity, exemplary style and international respect.

Yet Switzerland is an oasis of amazing eyewear talent and imagination, with designers who are implementing the valued and acknowledged skills of Swiss craftsmanship into unique frames that are represented in the finest, worldwide optical shops. Designers approach eyewear with individualistic metier, combining elegant styling, premium materials, plus intricate, sophisticated technology. Meet the Swiss designers who are making a global impact with their stunning and evocative eyewear.

SVEN GÖTTI: GÖTTI SWITZERLAND

Sven Götti was among the first to launch a designer name eyewear collection. The beautifully crafted frames are masterfully and technically a triumph with many 'firsts' achieved by the Swiss designer, who reflects on his eyewear adventures. "I designed my first glasses in 1994," explained Sven. "After my apprenticeship as an optician, a master's degree and the successful start of my own business, I was able to realise the dream of having my own eyewear collection. Back

then I did not know where this journey would take me. I had a lot of experience with glasses – and what makes them great through my job – but designing and producing them was new territory for me.

"Just recently, after a cleaning effort in the basement, I came across a little treasure: a box with some of the first glasses from the Götti collection," Sven continued. "It's amazing how eyewear design has changed in the last 20 years. At that time, we were also in a phase in which metal frames were very popular, although they were much smaller, and the more angular the better. It is nice to see that the same producers with whom we still work today made the very first samples.

"Even then, we had many owner-managed optical shops in Switzerland with short decision-making paths. This helped us to find the right partners for our eyewear in a relatively quick and uncomplicated way, and we were able to establish excellent relationships over the years. We continue to



Titanium minimalism by Götti Switzerland

have strong partnerships with many of our very first customers. This shows that the market at the higher price segment in Switzerland, and abroad, has remained relatively stable. Götti as an eyewear collection has moved with the times, and we have reinvented ourselves again and again. Today more than ever, it is important to position yourself. This applies equally to opticians shops, as well as to our eyewear collection," concluded Sven.

www.gotti.ch

CHRISTOPHE KOZMA: VON ARKEL

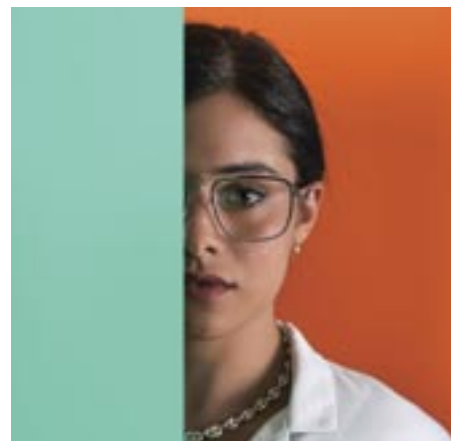
On the outskirts of the charming city of Lausanne is the headquarters for Von Arkel Switzerland. The beauty of Lake Léman that weaves through the region, and the trail-blazing techniques of Swiss watchmaking are the solid foundations on which optician Christophe Kozma embodies the eyewear creations. Traditional spectacle skills, combined with distinguished Swiss watchmaking concepts and innovative hinge mechanisms, result in illustrious



Sven Götti with Joan Grady
(photo courtesy of Nina-Maria Glahé)



Christophe Kozma



Sleek Outline Caliber 4 by Von Arkel



Sandra Fink and Monika Kaufmann
(photo courtesy of Nina-Maria Glahé)

frames that are acclaimed for streamlined elegance.

Beautiful materials, including titanium and buffalo horn, are included in the Von Arkel collection of optical and sunglass designs of heirloom quality for men and women. Von Arkel's Caliber hinge series – with an exclusive patent – combines unique technological achievements: no rivets, screws or soldering. The development of the Caliber hinge was researched with great finesse and skill, and the result is exquisite functionality.

www.vonarkel.com

SANDRA FINK AND MONIKA KAUFMANN: SOL SOL ITO

Design duo Sandra Fink and Monika Kaufmann are intrepid bike riders in Zurich, and expert tour guides of the sophisticated Swiss city. Their adventurous spirit extends far beyond Europe, as it was a visit to Sausalito, California, which inspired the company name. Both have design backgrounds – Monika in construction engineering, and Sandra in industrial art. Sandra is also co-head of industrial design at the Zurich University of Arts and Design.

Their prodigious travels enable Sandra and Monika to absorb their interests and passions in culture and the arts, which translates into the collection that flows with individualistic frames. Bold statement designs in acetate, plus acetate and metal



Stylish sunglass statement by Sol Sol Ito
(photo courtesy of Nina-Maria Glahé)



Nirvan Javan

combinations, are their legacy. Voluptuous silhouettes are further enhanced with distinctive colours and signature accents, and both optical frames and sunglasses exude distinction, dash and a flash of dare. Every design detail is scrutinised in their charming atelier in Zurich.

www.solsolito.com

NIRVAN JAVAN

With his Persian heritage and innate fashion instincts, Nirvan Javan created his company three years ago, and has already collaborated frame designs with Beldona, the Swiss swimwear company. His latest metal frames for men and women are superbly sleek, lightweight and with polished style and splendor. The fashionable, impressive sunglasses are fitted with Zeiss lenses.

Javan reflected on starting the company: "When it comes to the challenges to build an eyewear business I instantly have two perspectives in mind. One is the design perspective where the prior objective is to launch the right product at the right time to fulfill the different needs of the consumer, optician and the press. The other one is the entrepreneurial perspective where a holistic



Manuel and Mara Iten
(photo courtesy of Nina-Maria Glahé)



Slim silhouettes by Nirvan Javan

view and understanding of the whole business environment is crucial."

www.nirvanjavan.com

MANUEL AND MARA ITEN: FASSUNGSWERK

Nature is a vital component in the lives of Manuel and Mara Iten, and their desire to be close to nature is linked to the brand – Fassungswerk. They launched the label three years ago, in the picturesque village of Ganterschwil, near St Gallen, with eco-friendly designs in acetate and horn. Optical frames and sunglasses are graceful and contemporary, in neutral colourations, further reflecting their company creed. "We love nature, and being outside with our dogs," said Mara, "and all of our frame names are related to the animal world – snow leopard, sea otter and Wolverine, among others."

The Itens are slowly building their business beyond Switzerland, and express their desire to be certain that everything, "about the designs is perfect with fine quality control." Fassungswerk exhibited at Hall of Frames Zurich, with opticians visiting from Switzerland, Austria and Germany.

www.fassungswerk.ch

Swiss designers offer independent opticians inviting possibilities to explore multi-diverse concepts of spectacle design. Additionally, the collections present an ideal way to introduce patients to visionary and ingenious eyewear, while stimulating additional growth potential for your business.



Reflecting Nature in contemporary designs – Fassungswerk



Preferred Suppliers' Directory

Preferred Suppliers are suppliers who, by prior arrangement, offer members of the PK National Eyecare Group preferential terms. For full details and terms offered to the membership, please call **01580 713698**

Directory listings are available free of charge to all preferred suppliers, with a larger listing available to Vision Now Advertisers. To make changes to the directory listings, please call Sally Spicer on **01580 713698** or email s.spicer@nationaleyecare.co.uk

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Fax: 0871 351 1005
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Fax: 01628 665077
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BARCLAYCARD

Tel: 0800 056 5569

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Tel: 020 8781 2900
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sales@bibonline.co.uk
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