

THE PROFIT ADVISOR

Business Strategies for ABB Optical Group Customers

How ABB Optical Group Supports Your Practice Growth



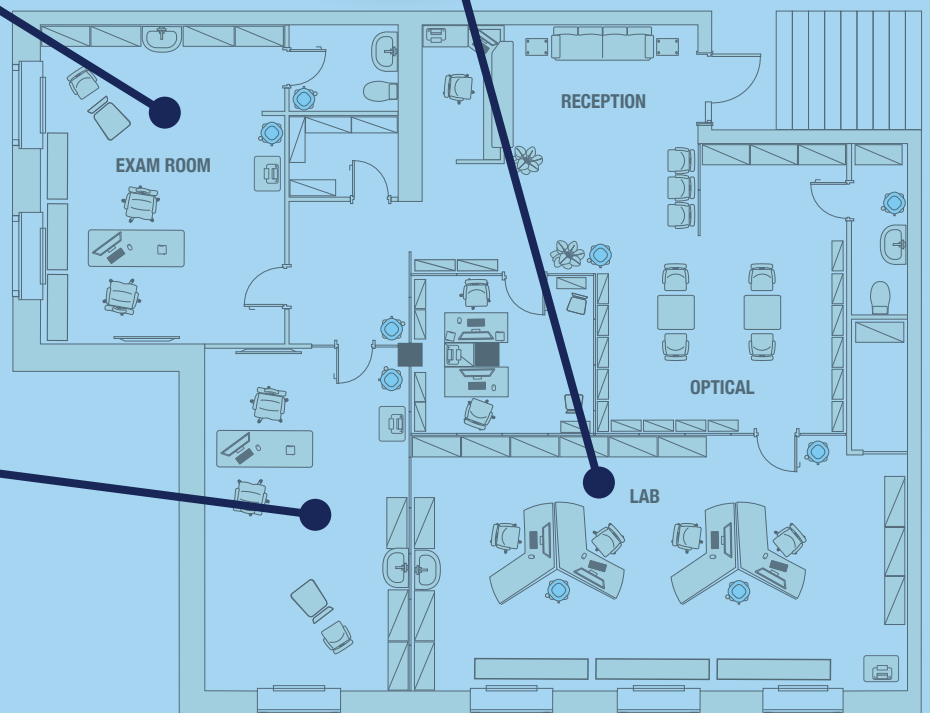
ABB Contact Lens



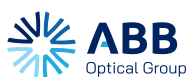
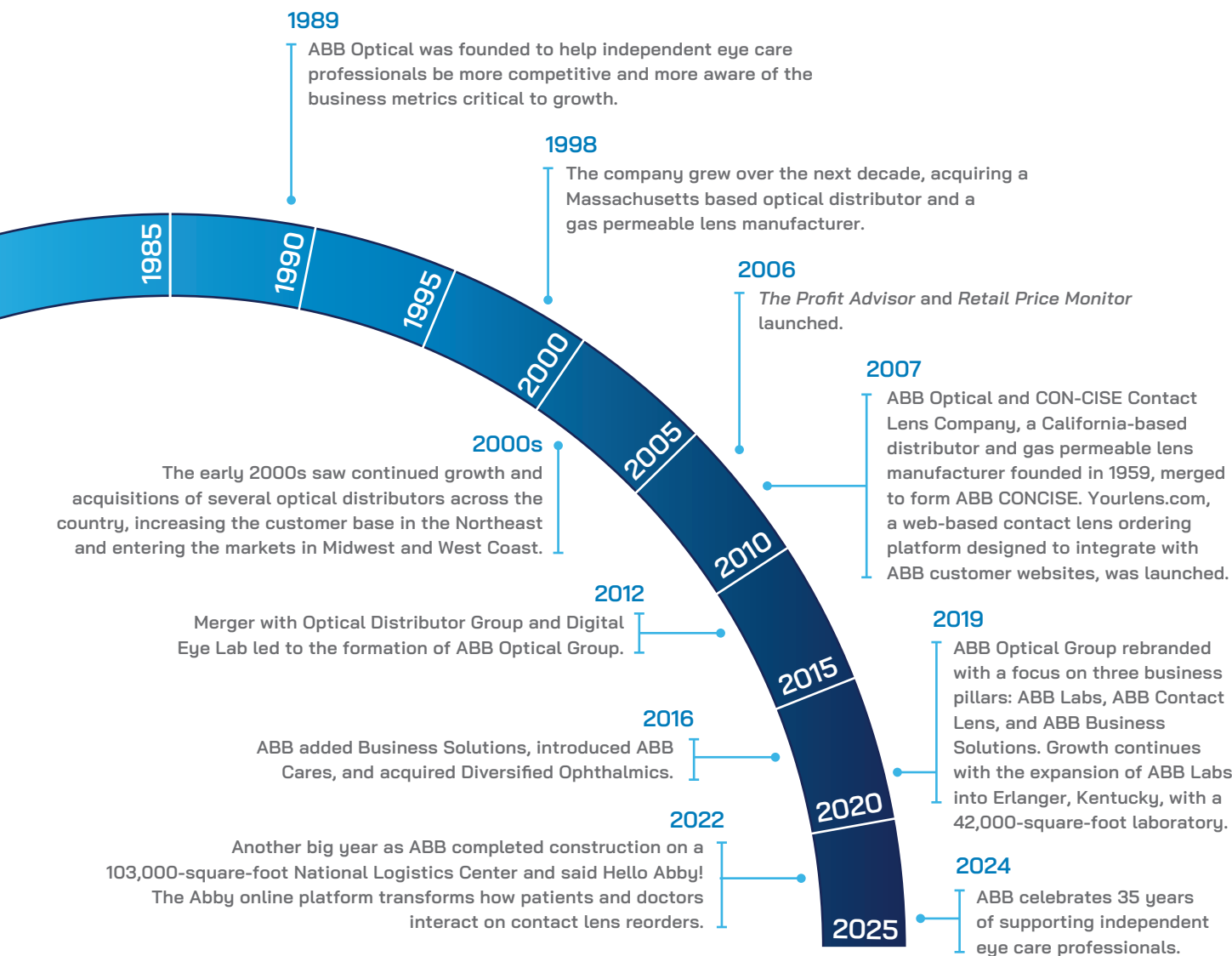
ABB Labs



ABB Business Solutions



35 YEARS OF INNOVATING AND ADAPTING TO HELP INDEPENDENT PRACTICES THRIVE



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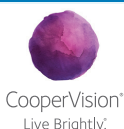
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BUILDING ON A STRONG LEGACY



Angel Alvarez



James Gilchrist

A Q&A with ABB Optical Group Founder Angel Alvarez and President James Gilchrist

The optical industry is rapidly evolving, and ABB Optical Group has been at the forefront of these changes for over 30 years. In this Q&A, *The Profit Advisor* talked with **Angel Alvarez**, the founder of ABB Optical Group, and President **James Gilchrist** to discuss the journey of ABB, their commitment to independent eye care professionals (IECPs) and their vision for the future.

The beginnings

Q: Tell us how ABB Optical Group got started.

Angel Alvarez: "I was working for what was then Ciba Vision when the opportunity arose. The business landscape was shifting towards disposable contact lenses, and I saw independent doctors struggling with the logistics of this transition. They weren't equipped to handle the increased transaction volume. It was 400% to 800% more volume than what they had been doing. This, combined with the rise of mail order, made it challenging for them to remain competitive.

"My background in finance and my work at Florida Power and Light and Ciba helped me realize that these doctors needed more than just products; they needed a strategy. I had been running the kind of what-if scenarios—the sorts of reports that Excel does now—to help build business in territories. That's when I decided to start ABB to help doctors manage their practices better.

"It was really a fundamental change. Until that time, IECPs felt like the only variable they could control was price. But we came in and helped them develop a strategy with a fee analysis plan. That became the start of *The Profit Advisor* and the *Price*



Monitor. We would analyze our highest performing 500 practices and study what they were doing."

Q: How important has the commitment to IECPs been since ABB's inception?

Angel Alvarez: "For over 30 years, our commitment has been to help eye care professionals attract and keep patients, improve efficiencies and increase profitability. We win when they win. When they lose a patient, we lose a patient. It has always been central.

"One of our proudest achievements is helping independent practitioners, who represent 70% of the eye exam business, leverage the collective volume of thousands of IECPs to stay competitive."

Q: How well positioned do you think ABB is for the future?

Angel Alvarez: "ABB is uniquely positioned due to our ability to adapt quickly and be independent. We've invested

heavily in technology and remain committed to the success of IECPs. Our impartial and interconnected approach allows us to deliver what's best for the consumer. We have always believed that when the IECPs gain business, we gain business."

Building on that legacy

Q: James, building on the legacy that Angel and his team built, how do you see ABB continuing to support IECPs?

James Gilchrist: "Through our competitive suite of products, services and solutions, we help eye care professionals maintain their edge. We offer single-source convenience, access and choice, data and business insights and enhanced services. Our commitment to being authentically independent sets us apart. We can't win unless our IECP customers are winning."

Q: What unique strengths set ABB apart?

James Gilchrist: "First, I want to say how much Angel impressed me with his leadership, long before I joined this company. He was a leader who stood for certain principles and values and always put ABB's IECP customers and employees at the center of ABB's focus.

"Our unique combination of independence and breadth of capabilities is a differentiator. In this era, we have companies at two ends of the spectrum. We have those companies that are vertically and horizontally integrated with significant assets and capabilities to serve their customers, but they are not independent and

Continued on following page

often also compete with their customers. This shapes, and sometimes limits due to competing priorities, how they can support IECPs. On the other end are companies that serve one specific market area or optical category and have deep capabilities and expertise in that area to serve their customers, but they lack the breadth of capabilities to serve IECPs across their entire business.

"ABB sits in the middle as the only independent service provider with the breadth and depth of capabilities to support IECPs across all three optical categories—contact lenses, stock lenses, and frame—to help them grow their businesses. At ABB our focus is empowering IECPs as the largest independent provider of optical services and solutions to provide better vision for their patients. Our goal is to leverage our capabilities so our IECP customers can focus on what matters most to them—patient care."

Vision for the future

Q: What's your vision for the future of ABB and how it might evolve as the industry does?

James Gilchrist: "We aim to stay authentically independent and focused on solving the unique challenges of eye care providers so that they can thrive. We believe that our unique position in the market enables us to be the industry leading partner to



Celebrating early success with YourLens.com

IECPs and other industry players.

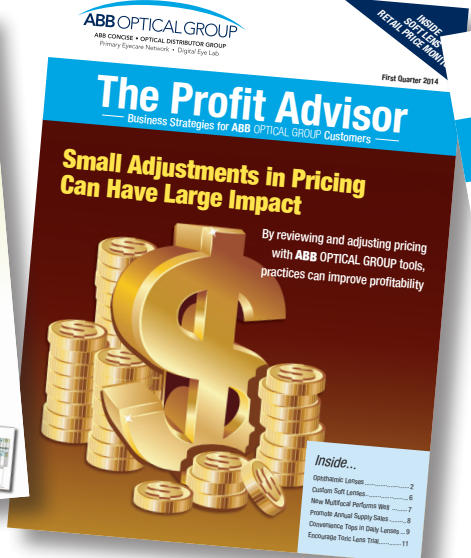
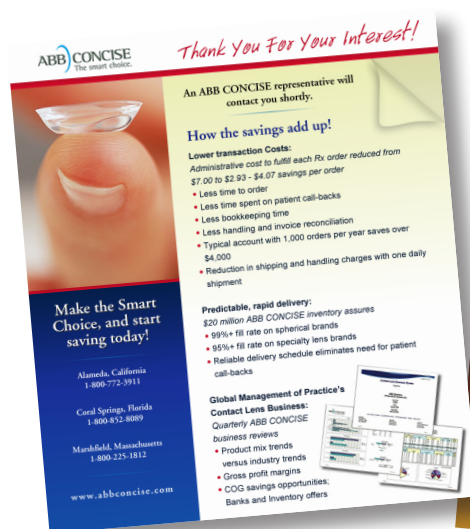
"We have tremendous assets that we can leverage with our partners. Today we are the industry leading contact lens distributor and the largest and fastest growing independent ophthalmic lab network. We've invested in a suite of services to drive efficiency and growth for our IECPs and partners. As part of our next evolution, we are looking at how to bring together these capabilities, in combination with key partners in each optical category, to best serve our IECP customers in the uniquely independent way that only ABB can. We want to focus on what differentiates us and does not create distractions.

"There are so many opportunities in this incredible and dynamic industry, but we need to stay focus on our core business, as

the only pure play service provider that can support all optical categories, and bring the right programs to our customers."

Angel Alvarez: "Change happens first among the independents. They're the tip of the spear. They're very quick to want innovative solutions, so it's a great place to be."

James Gilchrist: "ABB Optical Group's remaining authentically independent is a cornerstone of our success. By continually adapting and leveraging technology, we are well-positioned to support the evolving needs of the independent eye care professionals. Our teams are dedicated to helping your business thrive so that you can focus on what matters most." **PA**



Through the years, ABB Optical Group has been sharing strategies for success with its accounts.

ABB LABS: BEHIND THE LENS



INDEPENDENT PRACTICES COUNT ON ABB OPTICAL GROUP FOR QUALITY, RELIABILITY AND GUIDANCE

Independent eye care professionals (IECPs) who have been working with ABB Optical Group often stay with the distributor for years. While many initially signed on with an account for soft contact lens distribution, as ABB became larger and more diverse, adding lab products and business solutions to its portfolio, these accounts' businesses grew.

Business, Profits and Expanded Portfolio All Grow With ABB

Jay Harrelson, OD, first heard about ABB Optical Group in 2019 when he opened Clearview Eye Care in Jacksonville, Florida. He began leveraging ABB because it made sense to consolidate his contact lens orders. He also values the data insights in the Digital Retail Price Monitor that allows him to stay competitive in his pricing and react more quickly to cost fluctuations. "As I learned more about the full portfolio, I put more of my eggs into that basket," he says.

Today, in addition to ordering soft contact lenses, he uses ABB as a source for his stock lenses, lab orders, specialty vision products and business solutions.

With an in-house lab, the practice finishes a lot of patient orders, relying on ABB Labs' stock lenses. Dr. Harrelson also says the digital MOD Pal and G Pal lenses are excellent products, "and with the pricing ABB offers on Shamir, we can get a little more margin. Then when we need to order a complete job, ABB Labs is very reliable," he says.

Dr. Harrelson appreciates the breadth of the specialty vision products portfolio as well as the expertise. "I use the Dyna Z semi scleral cone lens, the gas permeable PureSight Multifocal and the ICD FLEXFIT scleral lenses regularly. I can evaluate the fit, but the consultants are great if I need any troubleshooting. I'll check in with them on orders, and it's nice to have someone review what I'm seeing and when I want to confirm that the prescription is most appro-



Dr. Jay Harrelson, owner of Clearview Eye Care in Jacksonville, Florida

priate," he says.

For ECPs who are not as familiar with specialty vision products, those consultations could shorten the learning curve and boost the ECP's confidence, he says. Since Dr. Harrelson has hired a scribe, his process is that he'll review the notes during a break in patient care and order the lenses at that time.

Dr. Harrelson says that he appreciates how ABB will introduce new services that are often very helpful to his practice. Abby, the online contact lens ordering platform, and consulting with his ABB Optical Sales Consultant **Christina Marble** for his Business Reviews are two of those.

"Abby has helped us increase our direct-to-patient shipments, which in turn has made life easier for the staff members. They appreciate not having to check lenses

in, contact patients, stop what they're doing when patients arrive and more," he says.

With the Business Review, he can track the impact of the policies they've implemented. "I have been lucky with a very consistent staff, so I don't expect to see major fluctuations. But if I did, we'd be able to react quickly and figure out what might have changed," he says.

“As I learned more about the full portfolio, I put more of my eggs into that basket.”

— Dr. Harrelson

The result of all of these efficiencies is that he and his staff can provide patients with quality products, often more quickly and conveniently. With his confidence in the distribution network and the consultative guidance he receives from his optical sales consultant, he has been able to focus on other efficiency-improving ideas, such as hiring a scribe. Taken together, these steps allow him and his staff to focus more on the patients in the office. **PA**

Bringing Edging In-house Changes Everything

Shannon Reyes, optical manager at Longleaf Eyecare in New Port Richey, Florida, was on board fully when owner **Margaret Argiropoulos-Dhima, OD**, talked about bringing an edger into the office. “Finally the timing was right a few months ago,” says Reyes. And the change has been more successful than they could have imagined.

Reyes had experience working in a lab, as did **Zoila Sullivan**, an optician who had recently joined the office. “It was a goal of ours to be able to do some jobs in-house to save cost and improve the turnaround time for patients who wanted something simple,” she says.

Now they’re finishing between 10 and 15 pairs of eyewear per day. “We send orders out for patients whose managed vision care plans require it, but we have a lot of patients with plans that do not. For patients who are paying for their eyewear themselves or who are getting a second pair, we now can compete with other retail locations that offer a fast turnaround,” she says.

Furthermore, the practice can enhance the value to patients. “We can provide patients with high-quality lenses at a great value,” she says. She emphasizes to patients that the practice will automatically upgrade plastic lenses to polycarbonate at no additional charge or add antireflective treatments. “These are quality lenses, such as

Shamir and Essilor polycarbonate lenses.”

Because the practice saves on its lab bills, it can also extend attractive offers to its patients. “We have a package with 40% off second-pair sales. Dr. Argiropoulos-Dhima wants all of our patients to have a current pair of sunglasses, or they can use that to buy computer eyewear. It helps bring the costs down for patients and helps us increase our capture rate and per-patient revenue,” she says.

Fast turnaround time

The turnaround time is a wow factor for patients, too. “If we need to edge while they wait, we can do that. Patients are extremely excited when we can offer that. Even if they need new lenses and want to reuse their frame as an immediate option, we can do it same-day or within 24 hours,” she says.

When Reyes needs to order, “We choose ABB Labs first. We order all of our VSP patients’ eyewear through ABB, and we also use ABB Labs for tinted or colorized lenses and wrap frames. I love that because I know it’s going to get done correctly and fast.”

Great support

Reyes says that the practice has been an ABB account since it opened. It has helped the practice consolidate its orders through one distributor for administrative efficiency and savings.

Autumn Reed, at the front desk, appreciates the simplicity of contact lens ordering with ABB. “I love Abby,” the online contact lens ordering platform for patients and practitioners. “Patients can have their soft contact lenses delivered to their home for free. I have limited space here, and those 90-packs can take up a lot of room,” she says. In addition to freeing up valuable real estate in the office, patients appreciate being able to place their own orders and track the delivery.

“We have a lot of patients who spend part of the year here and part of the year somewhere else. They appreciate that they can order their lenses from us but have them shipped to wherever they are,” she says.

Another benefit is that she can see the



With an edger, blocker and skilled staff, the practice now finishes 10-15 pairs of eyewear in-house each day.

reports on the back end. Those reports might show orders that were placed while the office was closed or that products are on their way to the patient. “The website is very user-friendly. I enjoy pulling out my Abby folder and seeing that the orders from the week before have all been fulfilled. That happens without us touching them,” she says.

The ABB support helps staff in the optical and front desk business areas complete their tasks more quickly, which allows them to spend more time with their patients and customers. And the ABB Optical Sales Consultant **Brian Daggy**, with additional support from Lab Account Manager **Laurie Mogck**, confers regularly with the doctor to review the business data. These reviews allow her to make business decisions that support growth and keep the practice competitive. **PA**



Longleaf Eyecare in New Port Richey, Florida (l-r): Shannon Reyes, Dr. Argiropoulos-Dhima, Autumn Reed, Zoila Sullivan and Jasmine Asuncion



How ABB Staff Help You Create MOMENTS THAT MATTER

“We are new to using ABB Labs, and I just have to say everyone has been awesome at placing our orders for our jobs. It’s been unbelievable.”

—**Rich, Raymond Opticians,**
Westchester County, New York

Office Manager Raves About ABB Optical Group's Exceptional Service and Products

Desiree Norman, office manager at Premier Vision of Dallas, in Dallas Texas, is effusive in how much she enjoys working with ABB Optical Group. "I have dealt with ABB for at least the past 10 years. When I came to work at Premier Vision of Dallas, and the practice was not working with ABB, I made the suggestion to **Karen Allen, OD.**" In a busy practice, making a change in labs can be a significant disruption. "Dr. Allen was gracious enough to give it a try. I told her that it was the one lab that I believed would work harder to achieve any goal for us," she says.

She hasn't been wrong, she says. "I honestly don't know if customer service could be any better, with their contact lenses or with ABB Labs. It's above and beyond the expectations," she says.

The practice orders its stock lenses from ABB, and it sends nearly every lab order to ABB Labs. "There's practically nothing that we do that isn't done with ABB. We are proudly an ABB house," she says.

The quality of the products is a key reason. "I have been wearing progressive lenses for more than 20 years. I currently wear Unlimited from ABB, and I tell everyone that the product is phenomenal," she says. She is pleased that ABB has worked to be innovative in the lens space.

The support

Norman likens ABB Labs to a 'teaching lab.' They're always there for education as well. If our opticians have any questions, we can call and get all the right answers. That



Desiree Norman, office manager of Premier Vision of Dallas, in Dallas, Texas.

helps keep our remakes low. The people on the other end of the phone have been trained so well," she says.

Norman says that working with a company that backs up the practice is the most important thing to her. "If there's a hiccup, we have this connection. I know ABB representatives will help me. I can go to the patient and say with confidence that we are going to figure out how to take care of any problem because I have this team that backs me up," she says. That promotes patient loyalty and trust. The practice could not offer that as confidently if it didn't feel that its vendor was in a true partnership, she says.

Norman says the ABB reports provided by the company help reassure her

and Dr. Allen that the practice is doing well. **Nicole Leonard**, the lab account manager, affirms that the practice has a very low remake rate. The staff has been able to maintain that, "but if something shifted, we'd be able to address it quickly before it got out of hand. The reports that ABB provides are amazing."

That helps the practice remain competitive and alert. "**Hunter Sharp**, the ABB contact lens account manager, continually finds ways to make the service better for us as accounts. If there's something new or something in the pipeline, they'll tell us about it. We never have to worry that we are unaware of what is available to us," she says.

"There's practically nothing that we do that isn't done with ABB. We are proudly an ABB house."

— Desiree Norman

So, instead of spending doctor and staff time on tasks and analyses, the ABB relationship allows them to spend more time helping their patients. **PA**



How ABB Staff Help You Create MOMENTS THAT MATTER

ABB Specialty Contact Lens Consultant **Crystal Bailey** has been working with an account with their Concise Colors prosthetic lens patients. She helped the doctor fit a lens that looks beautiful on the patient's eye, adding to his appearance and overall quality of life.



ABB Labs Customer Success Representative **Carlos Hernandez** has a love for the optical industry, so working in customer service at ABB was a natural fit. He says, "There is nothing that will stand in the way of always coming through for our team and our customers."



HEALTH AND STYLE: THE DUAL APPEAL OF TRANSITIONS® GEN S™ LENSES

There's a reason that Austin Ryan Optika, with three locations in New York's Hudson River Valley, received both the Transitions® Innovation Awards Eyecare Practice of the Year and Best in Marketing awards at Transitions® Academy a few years ago, a finalist for the 2022 Transitions® Healthy Sight Ambassador award: the opticians are enthusiastic about Transitions® lenses.

CEO, **Michael Frayler**, predicts that with the *Transitions GEN S* launch, the lenses will be more popular than ever. *Transitions GEN S* lenses provide a 39% faster vision recovery from intense bright lights¹ compared to clear lenses and reach sunglass darkness in 25 seconds². Frayler says he uses the term "smart lens" to describe the light management technology in *Transitions* lenses.

Showcase the innovation

The practices have developed several strategies to help educate and feature *Transitions* lenses, such as: Developing a merchandising, yet technical display to demonstrate how the lenses work, and reconfigured an older frame board with an LCD screen that plays Transitions videos. Additionally, Frayler creatively uses an Amazon Echo device that follows his command: "Alexa, turn on the sun." - The board illuminates (UV light) to mimic sunshine so that patients can watch the activation occur. He can also "turn off the sun" and patients can see the lenses fade back to clear in less than two minutes³.

Start with the lens, feature the style

At Austin Ryan Optika, patients are provided with a symptom checklist that opticians can review with them to determine which lens best addresses their unique light management needs. The launch of *Transitions GEN S* lenses features eight exclusive, true-to-tone colors, including a brand-new addition: *Transitions GEN S* Ruby. While being fully clear indoors, and beautifully colored outdoors, the patient can explore endless pairing possibilities to complement any look.

Emphasize health

The fashion and style of *Transitions GEN S* lenses is evident, but Frayler says the opticians should focus on health aspects. "The change rate is incredible. A patient moving from bright outdoors to indoors will not experience the 'static vision'—a long period of adjustment." Instead, the change is dynamic and ultra-responsive." He emphasizes that the lenses filter up to 32% blue-violet light indoors and 85% outdoors⁴ and can help to protect the skin around the eyes.

Get excited about lenses

Most patients (and practice staff) don't get too excited about lenses; however, *Transitions GEN S* lenses can change that. "The lenses are the prescription. That's what the patient needs. So, by presenting the lenses first, we can emphasize benefits to vision," he says.

He says that his ABB and Transitions



Michael Frayler, CEO of Austin Ryan Optika in New York's Hudson River Valley.

Optical representatives help keep the staff updated on technology changes so staff can present new products correctly and confidently." **PA**

Legal Attributes

1. Subject-masked cross-over randomized controlled investigation performed in 2023 on 30 healthy participants (19.2 ± 1.3 years). Testing light stress (discomfort and disability glare, photostress recovery) with the clear and darkest states of grey Transitions® GEN S™ 1.6 index lenses with a premium anti-reflective coating compared to clear 1.6 index lenses with a premium antireflective coating. Principal Investigator Prof Billy R. Hammond.

2. For polycarbonate & CR39 lenses across colors achieving 18% transmission @ 23°C.

3. For grey polycarbonate & CR39 lenses with a premium anti-reflective coating fading back to 70% transmission @ 23°C.

4. Blue-violet light is between 400 and 455nm (ISO TR 20772:2018)

Transitions is a registered trademark of Transitions Optical, Inc. Used under license by Transitions Optical Limited. *GEN S* is a trademark of Transitions Optical Limited. ©2024 Transitions Optical Limited. Photochromic performance may vary across colors and lens materials and is influenced by temperature and UV exposure.



ABB Business Solutions Customer Service Representative **Natalia Solano** is an out-of-the-box thinker who provides amazing ideas and solutions. Her co-workers appreciate how she tackles complex situations with Abby integrations and handles so many of the Verify chats.



ABB Contact Lens Customer Success Representative **Denise McGuiggan** exemplifies excellent service. She was recently recognized by her team for going above and beyond helping to make improvements in the customer experience. She is a leader who listens to what customers are saying and relays that into action.

THREE FEATURES COMBINE IN A GREAT MULTIFOCAL CONTACT LENS

For eye care professionals (ECPs) who already face difficulty in meeting the needs of presbyopic contact lens wearers, the visual demands of today's digital lifestyle may have made successful fits even more challenging. With the launch of the ACUVUE® OASYS MAX 1-Day MULTIFOCAL lens, many of these challenges can be met straight on. A next-level¹ lens features three remarkable design characteristics:

» TearStable™ Technology—optimizes wetting agent distribution throughout the lens and on the surface^{1,2,3}

» OptiBlue™ Light Filter[†]—reduces light scatter associated with blue-violet light^{†,2}

» ACUVUE® Pupil Optimized Design—the only brand family with 100 percent of parameters optimized by both age and refraction^{1,4}

Indeed, **Bob Davis, OD**, of Pembroke Pines, Florida, says that he's not sure which of these three characteristics exceeds the others in importance. It's truly the combination of the three that makes this lens such a winner in his practice. "The Pupil Optimized Design lens offers terrific comfort with ACUVUE®'s unique optical design,⁴ combined with the benefits of ACUVUE OASYS MAX 1-Day MULTIFOCAL—the first and only major brand multifocal contact lens with a blue-violet light filter,"^{†,4,5} he says.

Patients appreciate the advanced technology that brings added benefits, and Dr. Davis appreciates the reliability of the fitting process. "I can successfully fit more than 92 percent of patients in the first pair of lenses at the first visit," he adds. "It reduces chair time when patients can leave the first visit with the first lens."

The aging eye

The visual demands of a digital life-style are challenging for many people. "But they are particularly troubling to the aging eye

because of an increased prevalence of tear film instability," says **Denise Whittam, OD**, of New York, New York. "If the tear film is breaking up quickly, patients are likely to feel like their lenses are drying out or are uncomfortable. This could also cause patients to experience inconsistent vision."



Dr. Davis



Dr. Whittam

TearStable Technology is a manufacturing technology that optimizes wetting agent distribution on the surface and throughout the lens to support greater tear film stability and enhanced moisture retention.^{1,2,3} In clinical trials, patients reported all-day comfort,⁸ with 94 percent reporting comfort throughout the day⁸ and 90 percent reporting good end-of-day comfort.⁸

Presbyopic patients don't necessarily understand what's happening to their eyes, but they do know that they're not seeing as well. "Light scatter doubles by the age of 60⁹ and becomes even more intense as patients age. At the same time, their accommodative ability lessens, leaving many to feel frustrated by this highly noticeable sign of aging,"

Dr. Whittam says. Letting patients know that there is an option

that provides them with clear vision and comfort before they get frustrated is part of the conversation she has with patients.⁸

All-day comfort⁸

Comfort becomes so important "as we try to prevent dropouts," says Dr. Whittam. "During COVID-19, many patients told me that they stopped wearing contact lenses because of discomfort issues. But as these patients were going on video calls, they wanted to wear their contact lenses. They are looking to us to recommend a contact lens that allows them to see clearly at all distances⁸ and is comfortable.⁸ Now we can also tell them that these lenses offer a blue light filter."[†]

Dr. Whittam says that it resonates with

her patients when she tells them that ACUVUE OASYS MAX 1-Day MULTIFOCAL is the multifocal contact lens she wears. "I am one of those people who works a 15-hour day between patient care and giving lectures or reviewing literature. I used to have to take my contact lenses out after dinner; now, I can wear them as long as I want during the day," she says. What Johnson & Johnson Vision has done with ACUVUE OASYS MAX 1-Day MULTIFOCAL is combine these three technologies in a lens that hits all the marks. **PA**

[†]Versus ACUVUE® OASYS 1-Day.

[†]Compared to competitor's designs, technology optimized for both the parameters of refractive error and add power.

[†]Versus publicly available information as of June 2022.

[†]Major brand contact lens manufacturers are Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Alcon Inc., Bausch & Lomb and CooperVision, representing a total of 88.1% of the multifocal market share as of June 2022.

[†]Filtering of HEV light by contact lenses has not been demonstrated to confer any health benefit to the user, including but not limited to retinal protection, protection from cataract progression, reduced eye strain, improved contrast, improved acuity, reduced glare, improved low light vision or improved circadian rhythm/sleep cycle. The eye care professional should be consulted for more information.

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³JJV data on file, 2022. Material Properties: 1-DAY ACUVUE MOIST, 1-DAY ACUVUE TruEye, ACUVUE OASYS 1-Day with HydraLuxe Technology and ACUVUE OASYS MAX 1-Day with TearStable Technology Brand contact lenses and other daily disposable contact lens brands.

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⁹Van Den Berg TJ, Van Rijn LJ, Michael R, et al. Straylight effects with aging and lens extraction. *Am J Ophthalmol* 2007;144(3):358-363.

A PREMIUM ONE-DAY LENS CAN ALSO BE A WORKHORSE

Dirk Massie, OD, CEO of Performance Eyecare, a 10-location practice in and around St. Louis, Missouri and nearby Illinois, recalls that when Bausch + Lomb INFUSE® lenses were introduced, he and his colleagues thought these lenses might be an effective problem-solver for patients with contact lens discomfort and dryness. "We were very happy with Biotrue® lenses and fit a lot of those. But as we heard such great feedback from our patients that we had moved into INFUSE, it slowly became our lens of choice," he says.

The next-generation silicone hydrogel material of Bausch + Lomb INFUSE lenses provides an optimized balance of moisture, modulus and oxygen permeability for comfort and ocular health. The lens maintains 96% of its moisture for a full 16 hours.

"Patients loved the comfort and the handling. Patients told us that they were able to wear these contact lenses comfortably where they needed to take their previous lenses out earlier in the evening. After hearing so many patients rave about it, it made sense from a clinical perspective to recommend this lens first-line instead of saving it to use as an upgrade option. I'm also a businessman, and the profitability is greater with premium lenses—and with the generous patient rebate, their net out-of-pocket costs are similar to what they were paying before," he says.

High-tech culture

Dr. Massie says that bringing the doctors and staff on board with a shift in contact lens presentation was not difficult. "It fits our culture to present patients with



"With the generous patient rebate, their net out-of-pocket costs are similar to what they were paying before."

— Dr. Massie

advanced technology. Just as our patients want the latest smartphone or computer technology, they come to our high-tech practice because they want to know what options are available to them," he says.

Having seen an increase in patients wearing premium one-day lenses, Dr. Massie says he wasn't surprised to see the same shift in patients with Bausch + Lomb INFUSE® Multifocal lenses. "We're very happy with these multifocal lenses. The optics are wonderful, and the lenses deliver a consistent, reliable fit. That's important because doctors and patients dislike the extra chair time that it may have taken in the past to fit multifocal lenses successfully," he says.

The 3-Zone Progressive™ design in Bausch + Lomb multifocal lenses is simplified with two ADD powers for an easy fit.

Dr. Massie notes that the number of patients wearing multifocal lenses at least part-time has increased, too. "Because we have great one-day lenses, we often present part-time contact lens wear as an option. In our conversations, we listen for patients' frustrations or challenges with their visual demands. If they say they wish they didn't have to wear their readers at restaurants, when going out or during work, we can suggest daily disposable multifocal contact lenses for those occasions."

Now, Dr. Massie is awaiting the Bausch + Lomb INFUSE® for Astigmatism lens launch. Twenty-four percent of the U.S. population has astigmatism greater than or equal to 0.75D in both eyes, and another 23% have that amount of astigmatism in only one eye. "I anticipate that we will have conversions from monthly and other one-day lenses, especially with any astigmatic patient who is having

end-of-day contact lens comfort issues. The INFUSE family is so well-liked by our doctors and patients, I can see this becoming our number one toric lens," he says.

Finalizing the prescription

Most patients walk out of the practice with precisely the right lens prescription in hand on the same day. Dr. Massie says the procedure in his practice is to call patients within a week. "If they love their lenses, we can order their annual supply and have it shipped directly to their home or office," he says. "Patients appreciate that convenience. But if we need to tweak the prescription, we can schedule a follow-up visit."

Dr. Massie says another policy that has proven to be very effective is to have the pricing conversation in the exam room. "We quote fees before we put any lenses on the patients' eyes. Our technician has a breakdown of costs, rebates and what the insurance plan will cover. Patients know walking out the door of that exam room exactly what an annual supply will cost them," he says. "People hate surprises, and we found that this strategy helps us eliminate any awkward moments at checkout."

But with the generous Bausch + Lomb rebate on these lenses, "it's a no-brainer for patients. In some cases, they're paying less for their annual supplies with these premium lenses than they were in their previous brand," he says.

He adds that he's grateful to have excellent relationships with his three Bausch + Lomb sales representatives and his ABB Optical Group Account managers. "We place all of our orders through ABB, which helps us with direct-to-patient shipping, selling annual supplies and having that single source overview on pricing. I also have a very close relationship with my B+L representatives who consult closely with us and make sure we have fitting sets, staff training on specific products and that we take advantage of the growth program that the company offers." **PA**

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HOUSTON OD CHAMPIONS MYOPIA EDUCATION AND ACCESSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Near the end of 2019, **Megan Stubinski, OD**, determined that she was going to implement a progressive myopia management program into her three Houston, Texas, locations. Then COVID-19 came, “and we let it drop by the wayside.” However, in 2022, the office placed it at the top of the priority list. “I believe that we’re doing a disservice to pediatric patients with myopia by not at a minimum talking about progressive myopia. We should be discussing options, because we see this condition every day, all day long.”

With more interventions, there’s no reason not to be engaged with this, she says.

“Initially, we focused on low-dose atropine and progressive addition lenses. This year, we are focusing in earnest on everything: growing orthokeratology, atropine and now MiSight® 1 day contact lenses,” she says. MiSight is designed for myopia control and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to slow the progression of myopia in children ages 8-12 at the initiation of treatment.**†

In Dr. Stubinski’s offices, MiSight is the most selected option. “First and foremost, it’s the easiest in terms of compliance. Kids can wear their soft contact lenses all day, and compliance is such a big part of any myopia management program,” she says.

In addition, the option has been highly effective,**‡ she says. “The results in my office mirror what CooperVision is seeing nationally,” she says. “I can tell parents how well it works and how simple it is to use,” she says.

She recently had a mom of a young patient text her. The mother is a -9.00D, and her 10-year-old is a -3.00D. He’s been wearing MiSight for a few years and his myopia has progressed only 0.25D. “She texted to say that myopia management is a godsend.”

“Hands down, patient education is the most important aspect of myopia management,” says Dr. Stubinski. “Parents and children must understand that they cannot just stop the therapy and walk away. They

need to be 100% on board, and they need to understand that there will still be some progression of myopia,” she says.

Dr. Stubinski uses a variety of tools to help her educate patients. As a member of the Vision Source network, she uses the protocol that the network developed. This includes an interactive progression predictor that uses the child’s age and refractions to date as part of the algorithm to show the likely progression of myopia with and without intervention.

“Those kinds of calculators or progression predictors land very well with parents. They’re easy to understand,” she says.

In addition, CooperVision has created videos that provide tips to eye care professionals to explain the condition and the therapy in a way that it resonates. “CooperVision also has videos of kids putting these contact lenses on and wearing them on their MiSight YouTube channel. That’s important because often a parent’s initial reaction is that ‘my kid is too young for contacts.’ So seeing other kids doing well with lens insertion and wearing goes a long way.”

Dr. Stubinski points out that myopia management is not a new idea. “When I was young, my stepdad and my mother were both at University of Houston College of Optometry, so I’d spend my summers there. Anytime they needed a kid for research, I’d be a part of it,” she says.

But more recently, with the introduction of products such as MiSight 1 day contact lenses, the research has become a clinical reality, she says. “MiSight has removed so many of the barriers. It’s a daily disposable lens, so it’s a healthy option for wearing contact lenses. With a little practice, kids can handle the insertion and removal,” she says.

Plus, the approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) specifically to slow the progression of myopia “is huge. As a mom myself, if I heard that there was a product with FDA approval, that’s the one I’d want. I can tell parents that the sole purpose of this lens is to help treat your child’s

myopia from getting worse quickly.”

The five ODs among the three locations are all MiSight prescribers. To help accelerate interest, the practice held a myopia management open house. “We picked a slow day in February. An associate and I had kept track of all the patients and parents to whom we had introduced myopia management but who didn’t come back for an evaluation,” she says.

The staff reached out to the parents to let them know about this event, which would offer some snacks, more information and extra discounts. Ten families from that list showed up for the event. “Not all chose to do the program, but it’s a great way to reintroduce the material and answer questions that these patients have,” she says. Not only do patients often have to hear information multiple times before deciding, “it’s a great way to reach out after that initial discussion.” Dr. Stubinski says that the practice will be repeating this event again this summer.

With options available to help children today minimize the risk of high myopia in the future, there’s really no reason not to engage parents and children into this conversation as often as possible, she says. **PA**

* Indications for use: MiSight® 1 day (omafilcon A) soft (hydrophilic) contact lenses for daily wear 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 8-12 years of age and have a refraction of -0.75 to -4.00 diopters (spherical equivalent) with ≤ 0.75 diopters of astigmatism. The lens is to be discarded after each removal.

† Compared to a single vision 1 day lens over a 3-year period.

‡ Using measured and modeled data, pooled across ages (8-17), MiSight 1 day slowed myopia progression by an average of approximately 50%.

§ Myopic children fit with MiSight 1 day contact lenses ages 8-15 continued to experience slowed myopia progression as long as they remained wearing the lenses as prescribed.

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

2. Arumugam B, Bradley A, Hammond D, Chamberlain P. Modelling Age Effects of Myopia Progression for the MiSight 1 day Clinical Trial. *Invest. Ophthalmol. Vis. Sci.* 2021;62(8):2333.

3. Chamberlain P et al. Long-Term Effect of Dual-Focus Contact Lenses on Myopia Progression in Children: A 6-year Multicenter Clinical Trial. *Optom Vis Sci* 2022 In Press.



Dr. Stubinski