

# THE PROFIT ADVISOR

Business Strategies for ABB Optical Group Customers



**ABB Labs**

## THE LAB THAT DELIVERS

*ABB Optical Group accounts share how ABB Labs delivers reliability and commitment to quality and make every job a priority*

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# Stepping Into the Spotlight: Former Optometry Student Challenge Winner Recalls the Impact

For **Veronia Abadeer, OD, FAAO**, winning the 2021 Optometry Student Challenge sponsored by ABB Specialty Vision Products was more than an accolade—it was a transformative experience that helped shape her career in optometry. At the time, she was a student at Nova Southeastern University College of Optometry, just beginning her clinical rotation in contact lenses.



“I had shown my attending professors that I was interested in pursuing a contact lens residency. One of them introduced me to the competition and encouraged me to participate because I had a strong case study to share.”

Her chosen case centered on a young patient, an 8-year-old boy with microphthalmia and microcornea. “He was a super high hyperope and aphakic,” Dr. Abadeer explains. “We fit him with a gas permeable lens so he could play tennis. Later, we added a bifocal to help enhance his school performance. It was a challenging case but very rewarding to see the impact it had on his life.”

The competition, where winners present at the Global Specialty Lens Symposium, was held virtually that year due to the pandemic. “It was my first

major presentation, and I really had to step outside my comfort zone.”

Despite the nerves, Dr. Abadeer embraced the challenge. “I didn’t know what to expect, but it was such a valuable

*“Don’t shy away from opportunities just because they seem intimidating.”*

— Dr. Abadeer

experience. It pushed me out of my comfort zone and got me thinking about contact lenses in new ways. I’m incredibly grateful for the opportunity.”

The experience left a lasting impression

on Dr. Abadeer, who graduated in 2022 and went on to complete a contact lens and cornea residency in 2023. Now practicing in Tampa, Florida, she reflects on how the competition fueled her passion for both patient care and education. “I’ve always enjoyed the academic side of optometry, and this experience reinforced that. I’m now pursuing opportunities to educate and mentor others.”

She advises students and new ODs not to let fear hold them back. “My advice is simple: don’t shy away from opportunities just because they seem intimidating. Preparing for something like this can feel overwhelming, but it’s worth it. You’ll grow so much from the experience.”

The following year, during her residency, Dr. Abadeer attended GSLS in person—a full circle moment that reminded her how far she’d come since her first foray into presenting. **PA**

## 2024 Winners to be Announced Soon

The annual Optometry Student Challenge encourages third- and fourth-year optometry students to participate in a presentation of their student-based case report or research study project around contact lenses.

Six abstracts are selected as finalists. Of the six abstracts, the top three will be recognized at the GSLS meeting held



January 15-18, 2025 in Las Vegas.

For more information visit [abboptical.com/optometrystudentchallenge](http://abboptical.com/optometrystudentchallenge).



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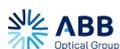
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# YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR SUCCESS



## Survey shows 92% of ECPs gave ABB Labs a high satisfaction rating with no dissatisfied ECPs

James Gilchrist, President

As 2024 comes to a close, I want to take the opportunity to thank you and your practice for allowing ABB to be your trusted business partner. It is our privilege to serve you and help you get more time back in your day to focus on patient care.

Because we are independent, ABB succeeds only when you succeed, which means we will always have the best interest of you and your patients in mind. This approach has been our guiding principle as we celebrate our 35th year of supporting independent eye care professionals (ECPs).

### ABB investing for the future

ABB continues to invest in our distribution and manufacturing network to keep our service levels high and increase our capacity all while expanding and enhancing our products and solutions in support of your practice. As the leading independent provider of services and solutions to ECPs, ABB is the largest and fastest-growing independent optical lab network, the largest distributor of soft and specialty contact lenses and an industry leader of services and technology solutions to help our ECP customers grow their practice by enabling them to focus on what matters most—patient care.

### Fastest-growing independent lab network

In just the past five years, ABB added a state-of-the-art 42,000-square-foot optical laboratory in Erlanger, Kentucky; welcomed Green Optics, an independent full-service optical laboratory based in Auburn Hills, Michigan to the ABB family; and significantly expanded the manufacturing space and capacity of our optical laboratory in Hawthorne, New York, while increasing our



stock lens portfolio and distribution capabilities.

As an independent company that does not own any lens brands, ABB Labs solely exists to provide the best service to our ECP customers and their patients, and we offer high-quality lenses from a wide portfolio of brands to meet the needs of your practice. It's no surprise that in a recent independent survey, ABB Labs was found to be in the top three most-mentioned labs



The flag is a prominent feature at the Hebron, Kentucky, National Logistics Center.

by ECPs. In fact, 92% of ECPs gave ABB Labs a high satisfaction rating with no dissatisfied ECPs, the only labs in the survey to receive this distinction. The high satisfaction amongst our customers also resulted in ABB Labs being rated as the lab with the highest percentage of customers, at 90%, that intend to do business with their lab a year from now. Our commitment to service is the driving reason our labs continue to grow multiple times faster than the market, and we are grateful that so many ECPs have put their trust in ABB Labs to serve their practice and their patients. We look forward to another year of providing the best service in the industry.

With the recent announcement of the closure of VSPOne labs and the upcoming high season when many labs struggle to provide consistently high-quality service, your practice may be left scrambling to find a new lab partner. We have the capacity and service to support your practice, and we are able to fabricate Unity, Shamir, Essilor, Seiko and our high-quality proprietary ABB lenses and coatings in-house and in the U.S. If you haven't had the chance to experience the incredible services that ABB Labs have to offer, I ask that you give us a chance to show you why ECPs are so satisfied and what makes our labs so special.

### Largest distributor of soft and specialty contact lenses

ABB also opened our 103,000-square-foot National Logistics Center in Hebron, Kentucky, and recently expanded our Florida distribution center to match the industry-leading SKU coverage in Kentucky to create the most consistent, highest-service distribution network in the industry. Additionally, we have expanded our footprint in our Kansas City Specialty Contact Lab by ~50% to support further customer

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Exhibits at eye care conferences provide an opportunity to showcase ABB's capabilities.

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 growth and expansion. Over the past year, we have made significant investments in our facilities, equipment, systems and team members to enhance our service. The result is a nearly 20% increase in the number of patients for whom we've been able to help our ECP partners provide better vision.

We have also invested in the future with more integrations to contact lens reordering platforms than any other distributor. We launched Abby, an online contact lens reordering platform that keeps ECPs at the center of eye care to support a practice's contact lens business. Abby is the only no-cost, manufacturer-neutral contact lens platform in the market and represents our commitment to support you—because at ABB, we only succeed when you succeed.

### Industry leader of services and technology solutions

ABB Business Solutions offers a comprehensive suite of technology tools designed to help your eye care practice achieve long-term cost savings and growth while reducing staff workload. As an eye care provider, you deserve technological solutions that simplify every aspect of your business, allowing you to focus on what matters most—patient care.

ABB is focused on providing your practice with value-added services and technology solutions that save your staff time, increase practice efficiency and drive revenue opportunities.

ABB Verify is a communication solution that seamlessly integrates with your practice management software system. It can alert your patients automatically about upcoming or overdue appointments, as well as their unused insurance benefits to help them meet their eye care needs. On average, 20% of your patients have unused

benefits every month. By messaging them, our customers average an additional \$300 per patient transaction. (Results may vary by customer.)

ABB Analyze is a powerful performance metric technology solution that not only benchmarks against regional and national peers but also centralizes and organizes practice data into key metrics that you can use. Our performance dashboards provide a clear and concise view of your practice's performance regardless of how many locations you have. Additionally, ABB Analyze provides instantaneous access to ABB's Digital Price Monitor, an industry-standard competitive pricing report. This web-accessible pricing report is updated weekly with online competitive retail pricing data to help ABB customers make educated decisions on their contact lens pricing strategy. If you aren't using this complimentary tool that we provide all our contact lens customers, sign-up today at [info.abboptical.com/digital-price-monitor](http://info.abboptical.com/digital-price-monitor).



A busy day in the shipping department.

For those who are looking for the convenience of consolidated billing on one monthly statement and access to a negotiated portfolio of vendors, ABB OneBill is just one more way ABB can add value to your practice. Celebrating its 40th year of helping ECPs, ABB OneBill was originally founded in 1984 as Primary Eyecare Network.

### Celebrating 35 years

Before the year is up, I hope you join us in celebrating our 35th Anniversary by visiting [info.abboptical.com/celebrating-35years](http://info.abboptical.com/celebrating-35years). You will hear from our new CEO, **Daniel Liberman**, learn more about ABB's rich history and read an interview with me and founder **Angel Alvarez**. You can also submit your favorite moments along your journey with ABB or give a shoutout to an ABB employee.

### Looking ahead to 2025

ABB will continue to stay true to our legacy of leading the industry with innovative services and solutions that focus on future growth for the independent eye care professionals we serve.

Our leadership team has identified priorities for the new year to ensure we provide you with the best offerings so you can in turn provide the best care for your patients. All of our initiatives are focused on how we can help enhance the patient experience because we know that your success is directly correlated with our own. When you lose a patient, we lose a patient. Not many companies in this industry can unequivocally say this without hesitation, but that is what it means to be a truly independent business partner.

Your Optical Sales Consultants are tasked with helping you achieve the goals that matter most for your practice. They will discuss strategies to help retain your patients in every aspect of your business and celebrate when you reach that goal together. Whether you are interested in growing your direct-to-patient business, need strategies to protect against online threats or are looking for ways to drive more revenue in your practice, your Optical Sales Consultant is here to help and be an extension of your practice.

I am also excited to share that we will be launching a new offering to even further enhance our support for ABB's most loyal customers. Stay tuned for the full details that will be announced early next year.

Thank you for your continued support and for trusting us to care for your practice and your patients. **PA**

# NEED A NEW LAB?

## Incorporating ABB Labs adds value to your overall ABB business relationship

While changing labs may not be on anyone's wish list of office tasks, sometimes it's necessary or smart to do so. ABB Labs wants to make that process as smooth as possible.

ABB Labs has the support and range of

products to help you with a successful transition. Plus, ABB accounts that have added ABB Labs services have found even greater value in their business relationship and administrative ease by consolidating more of their transactions and orders with ABB.

In a recent survey, 92% of customers said that they were satisfied with ABB, and 90% who use ABB Labs for their eyewear orders plan to stay with ABB Labs.

### A top lab

ABB Labs is a top-three most-mentioned lab by eye care professionals, according to a recent independent survey. Its state-of-the-art technology and excellent team ensure that patients receive their lenses faster—so you can focus on what matters.



### Quick turnaround

ABB Labs delivers fast fabrication from its dedicated team of digital lens experts.



### High-quality products

ABB Labs offers the top brands and cutting-edge technology to make your patients happy. ABB Labs is a VSP Enabled laboratory fabricating Unity lens designs and coatings in-house.



### Predictable service

Accounts can order easily online or speak to a real human. That means that you get answers quickly and can resume your focus on the patients in the office. ABB Labs offers you one more way to focus on what matters most. [PA](#)

# Bynum Eye Care Expands ABB Business Partnership, Finds Stability for Optical Lab Services

For Bynum Eye Care in Whitesboro, Texas, navigating a change in optical labs proved smoother than anticipated, thanks to an expanded relationship with ABB Optical Group. About 18 months ago, the practice decided to make the switch to ABB Labs, and it has been a welcome change. After VSPOne shut down its lab in Texas, that move was even smarter, says office manager at Bynum Eye Care, **Shana Norman**.

The practice had long been using ABB for its contact lens orders. But with a majority of its patients covered by VSP, it made sense to owner **Robin Bynum, OD**, to stick with a VSP lab. "She a believer in the 'If it's not broke, don't fix it,' method for processes. And changing labs seemed like it would be an intimidating fix," Norman says.

### ISO new business partner

However, when VSP shifted its lab services, the practice began experiencing challenges. First, the company instructed the practice to use a lab closer by. "We had used that lab before but we were not as satisfied with the services. We tried to



Shana Norman and Dr. Bynum found that switching to ABB Labs has reduced the redo rate and improved the service to patients.

give that lab the benefit of the doubt with a second chance, but we kept running into the same problems."

Unable to use the VSPOne lab they used previously, the practice staff began considering a change. ABB Optical Sales Consultant **Hunter Sharp** reached out. Dr. Bynum, Norman, Sharp and ABB Labs Lab Account Manager **Nicole Leonard** met to go through the details.

"They spent so much time helping us

transition, educating us on points such as how their lab compared and the products they offered. They didn't rush anything, and that made all the difference," Norman says. The practice made the jump and the adjustments were fairly easy, she recalls.

Plus, they were fully into the swing of things when the announcement came out about the closure of VSPOne labs. For this practice, there was no scramble to figure out

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an alternate plan. They had their systems running smoothly, and ABB Labs was able to fabricate the Unity and Shamir lenses that the practice uses with its VSP patients.

"We're primarily a VSP practice, but we also love having the Unlimited lens for our private pay patients," Norman notes. "The pricing for ABB Unlimited is very competitive, and the quality is consistent with the premium lenses that we pride ourselves on offering to patients." The Unlimited lens is a personalized free-form progressive lens with an advanced design that provides flawless visual quality. Private pay patients appreciate the value and quality. "I have both the Unlimited and the Shamir Autograph, and I love them both," Norman says.

### Excellent service

Norman can look back at the experience of the past months and see the benefits the practice gains. "We have reduced the redo rate and improved efficiency since switching labs. Before, I'd have trays and trays—sometimes 20 or more—of redo jobs. With ABB, it's been minimal. We switched to the AR coating, and it's just better."

She appreciates ABB's user-friendly ordering system as well. "Whether it's through the phone, chat feature or online, the process is straightforward." She specifically appreciates the feature that if there's a warranty issue or the doctor orders a change to the lens, "it generates a whole new order number. It's such a simple step, but it makes it so much less confusing when a warranty order has its own unique number. There's no confusion."

Norman credits ABB's hands-on approach for making the transition smooth. "They spent time with our whole staff, going over everything and making sure we understood the process. They really listened to my concerns and followed up to make sure things were working right," she says. "My reps are phenomenal. If I have an issue, they are on it immediately. The customer service is top-notch."

### Accruing benefits

She's not entirely surprised by that, as she has come to expect that kind of service from the years the practice has been with ABB as its contact lens distributor. Norman, who has been working with Dr. Bynum

since before she opened this practice 14 years ago, recalls that they didn't initially start with ABB. "I ordered directly from each manufacturer," she says.

The desire to streamline the ordering, shipment-handling and billing processes, as well as the access to trials that ABB provided, made the decision to consolidate orders with ABB a smart one. Since then, the practice has been impressed with the company's dedication to innovation, such as its Abby online contact lens ordering platform. The practice had been using a different system but Norman says that patients and staff prefer Abby for its ease of use.

It's the collection of benefits that come from working with ABB that add up. "One of the things we liked from the start was that all the billing is in one place," Norman says. "It's a one-stop shop, and that's been great for saving time." Incorporating lab orders into that business amplifies the benefits and saves money and time.

And time saved in administrative processes like ordering, billing and shipping means that the two doctors and six staff members can focus on what matters most: giving patients their full attention. **PA**

## A Seamless Transition With Moving Kirkland Eye's Lab Services to ABB Labs

For **Jae Kim**, optician and optical manager at Washington Pacific Eye Associates and In Focus Optical in Kirkland, Washington, the decision to switch to ABB Labs was not made lightly. But looking back, it's one he wishes he'd made sooner.

"We've been with ABB Labs for a good year now," says Kim. "The reason we moved was simple—our VSPOne Sacramento lab was closing, and there just weren't good local options anymore" as so many independent labs in the area shut down after the pandemic.

"We tried going with a major national lab, but the difference in quality and speed was drastic. What used to take five days now took 10, and the hassle to get things done was frustrating. On top of that, the cost was astronomical."

That's when ABB Labs entered the picture, thanks to the recommendation of an ABB contact lens representative who noticed Kim's growing frustrations with lab options. "Our rep told us about ABB Labs, and we decided to try it out with our first 10

jobs. The quality and cost were phenomenal—it was an easy decision after that."



Jae Kim

Kim notes that

the savings have been substantial. "We're saving 35% on our lab costs, whether it's for progressive lenses, single vision or other jobs. Our old lab took 14 days to turn around jobs with AR coatings or progressive lenses.

With ABB, we're now getting those back faster."

### More time to focus on patients

The shift to ABB Labs didn't just save money; it streamlined operations and freed up valuable time for Kim and his team. "I used to spend 15 minutes a day solely checking the status of orders. Now, it's five minutes to unbox and let patients know

their glasses are ready. Rarely is there a delay, and that gives me more time to focus on customer care."

Kim also praises the attention to detail that ABB Labs brings with packing every order. Previously, he routinely unpacked broken or damaged frames. "ABB takes the time to individually wrap each frame, even using bubble wrap for rimless ones. I have not had a single breakage since switching."

The customer service experience with ABB Labs has been equally impressive. "I have a dedicated rep who takes care of everything—I don't have to go through a phone tree or wait endlessly. The follow-up is incredible, and they make everything seamless," he says.

"I wish I'd done it sooner. The faster turnaround and reduced hassle make a huge difference. The little things, like their attention to detail, matter. And the time I save on administrative tasks means I can spend more time with patients, which is what really counts." **PA**

# Reliability and Quick Turnaround: How ABB Labs Supports Bayshore Eye Care

When the doctors and staff at Bayshore Eye Care in Bradenton, Florida, began re-evaluating the practice's lab partnerships, the team wasn't entirely sure what to expect. After all, **Jamie Lawson, OD**, and **Kenneth Lawson, OD**, had been using their previous lab for nearly 20 years. However, optical manager **Mirla Navarro** says their decision to switch to ABB Labs has transformed the practice's workflow—and patient satisfaction.

*"With our old lab, it would take 14 to 16 days to process an order, so we'd tell patients it could take about three weeks. Now, jobs come back in three or four days."*

— Mirla Navarro

"We had been using ABB Optical Group to order contact lenses for years," Navarro says. "Then we started looking into ABB Labs because we were dealing with a lot of issues with our old lab—long wait times, incorrect coatings, scratches and even broken jobs."

The practice began by sending self-pay jobs to ABB Labs. "We immediately noticed jobs were coming back more quickly, and we weren't having those problems anymore," Navarro says. Encouraged by the ABB Labs team, Bayshore Eye Care gradually transitioned its lab business entirely, well before VSP announced the closure of its Florida lab earlier this year.

"As a VSP Premier practice, that announcement didn't affect us at all," Navarro says. "We already had our process in place, but I hear from other practices scrambling to figure out where to shift their business."



Mirla Navarro



Dr. Jamie Lawson and Dr. Kenneth Lawson

## Comprehensive support

Navarro credits ABB Labs' personalized support for making the transition seamless. "When we opened the account, ABB Labs sales team answered every question and concern," she says. Senior Account Manager **Brian Daggy** has been very responsive to her and has helped her connect quickly to resources if they're not in his area of expertise.

The live chat feature has also been a game-changer. "Between patients, I can get on live chat, get quick answers or resolve issues immediately," she says. "It saves me so much time compared to calling and waiting on hold."

## Happier patients

The impact of ABB Labs' efficiency is clear in the practice's patient satisfaction. "With our old lab, it would take 14 to 16 days to process an order, so we'd tell patients it could take about three weeks," Navarro explains. "Now, jobs come back in three or four days. At first, when we told patients it would take weeks and then called them back just a few days later,

they were so happy."

When issues do arise, Navarro says the ABB Labs team is ready to help. "If there's a problem with a coating or anything else, I can get answers right away. That means less waiting and fewer upset patients."

## Moments that matter

The efficiency has freed up Navarro to focus on what she values most: the patients. "I can spend my time helping patients who are picking out new eyewear or have questions, rather than troubleshooting lab problems," she says.

While Navarro in her role doesn't frequently use ABB's online contact lens ordering platform, Abby, she says it's intuitive when she does need to step in. "It's so easy to use, and the live chat there saves everyone time," she adds.

For Bayshore Eye Care, the switch to ABB Labs has been a win-win. "The turnaround time, the quality, and the support make all the difference," Navarro says. "It's saved us time, improved our process and made our patients happier. I can't ask for more than that." PA

# What Makes ABB Labs Support So Unique?

**A**BB Labs stands out for its unique approach to customer support, driven by a deep partnership between Lab Account Managers (LAMs) like **Laurie Mogck** and Lab Account Advisors (LAAs) like **Lindsay Louya**. They are part of a team that offers personalized and efficient service that ensures customers always feel taken care of.

“Our business model is much different from any other lab I’ve worked for,” says Mogck, reflecting on her experience in the industry. “In most labs, account managers are re-

sponsible for a small city or a few suburbs. Here at ABB, I manage accounts across four to six states. It’s a huge responsibility, but we’ve built a system that allows us to cover that ground effectively, and that system depends on teamwork.”

Mogck’s role as a LAM focuses on direct customer relationships. She spends a lot of time visiting clients, providing training and ensuring that they have everything they need to run their practices smoothly. But she couldn’t do it alone. “I rely heavily on Lindsay, our LAA,” she explains. “While I’m out visiting customers, Lindsay is handling everything behind the scenes. She’s my right hand.”

Louya, who supports several LAMs across different territories, emphasizes how close communication makes their work seamless. “We’re in constant contact,” she says. “We know each other well enough to anticipate how the other person would handle an issue, so we can keep things running smoothly for our customers.”

## Team dynamic

The team dynamic at ABB Labs is part of what sets the service apart, but it doesn’t stop there. Practices that also leverage ABB for their soft contact lens business have an Optical Sales Consultant (OSC) assigned to their practice. Mogck and Louya work alongside the OSCs as a cohesive unit to address any needs an account has.

“We have multiple sets of eyes on each account,” Mogck explains. “I’m the face in the field, Lindsay is the expert at the desk and the OSCs help with general account support. This multilayered support system means we can resolve issues much faster than other labs.”



Laurie Mogck



Lindsay Louya

Louya agrees, noting that ABB’s structure ensures that no issue falls through the cracks. “If there’s a problem—say a frame is lost in transit—we’re on it immediately,” she says. “We escalate things quickly, and customers appreciate how fast we can

get to a resolution. There’s rarely a problem we haven’t seen before, and we know how to fix it efficiently.”

*“We have the authority to make decisions that put the customer first.”*

— Laurie Mogck

As a former optician, Louya says, “I understand the pain points that practices face. Whether it’s getting a job done on time, managing lab orders or just navigating day-to-day logistics, I’ve been there. That experience helps me anticipate customer needs and solve problems before they even become issues.”

Mogck, also a former optician with more than 22 years of experience, agrees. “That experience gives us the flexibility to make decisions on the fly—decisions that other companies might not be able to make because they don’t have the same level of autonomy.”

## Extensive onboarding

Louya takes pride in making sure each new customer gets the support they need from day one. “Our onboarding process is one of the most extensive in the industry,”

she says. “We walk every new account through everything—how to use Vision-Web, how to print shipping labels and how to place orders online. We don’t just hand them off to a website and expect them to figure it out.”

Mogck adds, “The onboarding process is so important because it sets the tone for the entire relationship. We take the time to make sure everything is set up correctly, so there are no surprises down the road.”

## Multiple touchpoints

ABB Labs prioritizes getting customers the answers they need, whether that’s through a customer service team member or the chat feature on the web. If a customer needs an ETA on a job, they can jump into a chat feature or call the lab directly. We don’t make them wait on hold or try to figure it out themselves. We are all available to get them the answers quickly so they can focus on their patients,” Mogck says.

Another differentiating factor for ABB Labs is the flexibility that Mogck and Louya have in resolving issues. “We’re not going to argue over small details,” Mogck says. “If a customer has an issue, our goal is to resolve it as quickly as possible and keep them happy. We have the authority to make decisions that put the customer first, which is something a lot of other companies can’t always do.”

Louya sums up the ABB Labs approach: “We’re always thinking about how we can make things easier for the customer, whether it’s through our website, our product offerings or our communication. We aim to answer questions before they’re even asked, and that’s the kind of proactive support that really makes a difference.”

That team dynamic means that customers know they can rely on ABB Labs to provide fast, effective and personalized support at every step. When they are confident that they’ll get reliable answers and information they need, that allows them to spend more time focusing on the patients who are in the office. The ABB Labs team supports its practices to enable practice team members to be more responsive to their patients. In other words, the whole team at ABB works to provide your practice with more moments that matter in your direct interaction with your patients. **PA**

# PROVIDING COMFORT AND VISION STABILITY FOR YOUR ASTIGMATIC CONTACT LENS WEARERS

“Patients with astigmatism may face more challenges than their spherical lens counterparts, but with the right lens technology, these challenges can be effectively managed,” says

**Robert L. Rosenthal, OD**, of EYECARE for You in Newtown, Pennsylvania.

“With the current offerings from contact lens vendors, there’s no reason for eye care professionals (ECPs) to try to use spherical lenses to mask low levels of astigmatism,” he says. “Indeed, ECPs should be doing all they can to provide patients with the most precise and customized solution possible.” For instance, in one recent study, it was noted that low to moderate astigmatic patients who were fit with a toric soft contact lens versus a spherical soft contact lens could read smaller text at a faster rate.<sup>1</sup>

## Overcoming the comfort challenge

Dr. Rosenthal hears from some of his colleagues that the challenges of providing patients with consistent comfort and stable vision are the primary reasons they avoid toric contact lens correction.<sup>2</sup> Comfort may be influenced by the choices of lens material, lens design and replacement schedule.

For instance, unlike ballasted designs that have a thicker, weighted lower lens for stability which could interact with the lower eyelid, the proprietary BLINK STABILIZED® Design across the ACUVUE® portfolio of toric lenses harnesses the power of the blink<sup>3</sup>, resulting in minimal lower lid interaction to help support patient comfort.<sup>^3</sup>

Further, ACUVUE lenses for astigmatism have embedded tear-like wetting agents throughout the entire lens matrix, not just on the surface.<sup>4</sup> The long-chain, high-molecular-weight polyvinylpyrrolidone (PVP) is a particularly effective wetting agent, helping to provide exceptional comfort all day long,<sup>4</sup> he says.

Additionally, ACUVUE manufactures lenses for astigmatism in one-day, two-week and monthly replacement options, offering patients several options to meet their needs.

## Ensuring vision stability

With ballasted lenses, the performance generally benefits from the patient being upright, not stretched out on the sofa watching TV, for example. ACUVUE lenses



Dr. Rosenthal

help address this issue with its BLINK STABILIZED Design.<sup>3</sup> Unlike ballasted designs that may be affected by gravity to a greater degree,<sup>3</sup> the ACUVUE lens has four stability zones that work naturally with the eyelids to help keep the lens in the correct position, even with extensive head and eye movements,<sup>3</sup> Dr. Rosenthal says. The result is that patients maintain consistent, stable vision.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, Dr. Rosenthal would prefer not to put monocular astigmatic patients, which includes nearly 50% of astigmatic patients,<sup>5</sup> into a prism-ballast lens that introduces vertical prism into the optic zone. Some of these patients could begin to experience discomfort from a vertical prism disparity.<sup>6,7</sup>

## Best fitting practices

Achieving an optimal fit is crucial for toric lenses, as it directly impacts both comfort and vision stability. ACUVUE offers an online fitting calculator for all ACUVUE for astigmatism products here.

- A precise refraction is essential, with vertex correction applied to both the sphere and cylinder components of the prescription. “In my experience, patients with higher minus prescriptions and significant astigmatism (e.g., -3.00 and above), can be fit successfully with a readily available lens,” he says.

- Allow the lens to stabilize on the eye for at least five minutes before assessing its orientation. Check rotation after dynamic eye movements, such as having the patient look up and to the side before fixating on a central target. If stability cannot be confirmed, recheck after settling for about 20 minutes.

- Although rotational issues have decreased with technology advances in Dr. Rosenthal’s experience, he uses the LARS rule to adjust if necessary. LARS is the acronym for left add, right subtract, and

this method helps ensure that the patient receives clear, stable vision.

By paying close attention to lens material, edge design and stabilization methods, Dr. Rosenthal has been able to provide his astigmatic patients with exceptional comfort and stable vision.<sup>3</sup> PA

*Dr. Rosenthal serves as a professional affairs consultant for Johnson & Johnson Vision.*

<sup>^</sup>Traditional prism and peri-ballast lens designs have a thicker area below lower eyelid than ACUVUE® Brand Contact Lenses for ASTIGMATISM that can cause interaction and may cause unwanted rotation due to lateral movement of the lower lid during blinks.

\*Vertical heterophoria possibly caused by prism dissociation due to the presence of induced optical prism is a relevant factor for practitioners to consider when fitting toric contact lenses for monocular astigmats or those requiring a mix of toric soft contact lens designs e.g., mixed prescriptions.<sup>6,7</sup> Clinical studies have not been done to fully characterize the clinical effects of differences in base down prism among different contact lenses.

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- Important Safety Information: ACUVUE® Contact Lenses are indicated for vision correction. As with any contact lens, eye problems, including corneal ulcers, can develop. Some wearers may experience mild irritation, itching or discomfort. Lenses should not be prescribed if patients have any eye infection, or experience eye discomfort, excessive tearing, vision changes, redness or other eye problems. Consult the package insert for complete information. Complete information is also available from Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc. by calling 1-800-843-2020, or by visiting [www.jnjvisionpro.com/en-us](http://www.jnjvisionpro.com/en-us).

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# ABB Optical Sales Consultant Shifts Into Gear to Help

When ABB Optical Sales Consultant **Erica Shelton** saw the impact Hurricane Helene had on Asheville, North Carolina, she quickly got a team together to help with the relief efforts. She and her husband, a firefighter, began collecting resources they could bring to the community. The pair quickly accumulated two truckloads worth of supplies.

“When disasters like this happen, people lose everything, and they need help from their community. It’s not just about providing things like food or water; it’s about showing them they’re not alone. If you have the ability to help, you should—it makes a huge difference in their recovery,” she says.

As a sales consultant, she has developed problem-solving skills to help people find what they require. “That experience really helped me during the devastation of Hurricane Helene,” she says. “I’m used to organizing, communicating and finding solutions quickly, which was essential when



ABB’s Erica Shelton (l), gathered friends and supplies to help those affected by Hurricane Helene.

collecting donations for the Western North Carolina community.”

Shelton says she was surprised by the response to her call for assistance. She plans on making additional trips to help ensure that the people of Asheville have the resources they need to get back on their feet again.

“The response was incredible. People were so grateful, and I was touched by how many friends, coworkers and community members wanted to help,” she says. “It was a real reminder of how much good people are capable of, especially in tough times.” Shelton is reluctant to take credit for

her efforts, instead making sure that all the people involved are recognized for the work they put into helping with Hurricane Helene relief efforts.

“I’m proud of how everyone came together. It wasn’t just about me; it was about the collective effort of everyone who donated. Knowing that we were able to help people get back on their feet, even just a little, is something I’m really proud of,” she says. **PA**

*This article was originally published as part of a larger article in Vision Monday.*

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# FROM PERSONAL EXPERIENCE TO A PRACTICE FAVORITE

*Bausch + Lomb INFUSE® lenses help boost practice's one-day fits*

For **Bradley Powers, OD**, the journey with Bausch + Lomb INFUSE® lenses started as a personal one. Despite trying various contact lenses over the years, contact lens wear became more uncomfortable for him, he says.

"Over the past few years, I've tested countless lenses," but his experience with INFUSE was excellent, Dr. Powers says. "I told the doctors I work with at Eye Associates of Columbia & Charleston, and they ran with it. Many patients appreciate that several of the doctors wear it. It maintains its hydration for hours, and it feels good on the eye."

The INFUSE material blends osmo-protectants, electrolytes and moisturizers, ensuring up to 16 hours of moisture. It's available in sphere, toric and multifocal designs, allowing the doctors to present it as a one-day lens option for a variety of patients who might benefit from an advanced technology lens that provides excellent comfort and vision.

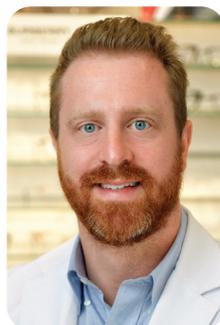
Dr. Powers' first-hand experience motivated him to engage more with Bausch + Lomb's reps, leading him to prescribe more of the company's products more actively than he had in the past. His advocacy for INFUSE is based on a simple goal: excellent patient outcomes. "For patients who have discomfort with their habitual lenses," many have said that INFUSE helps keep their contact lenses from

feeling dry. Our numbers of one-day lens sales have gone up," he says.

## Ask questions—often

Powers and his team take an individualized approach, starting with a comprehensive intake form that asks patients if they wear contact lenses, and more importantly, how they feel about them. If a patient answers affirmatively to a question, follow-up questions pop up on the screen. So if the patient is a contact lenses wearer, the system will prompt with questions about whether the patient feels discomfort or wants to take out their lenses at a certain time of day, for example. Technicians might ask for some more details during the workup.

Yet even if the patient doesn't express dissatisfaction, the doctors also engage in a conversation about contact lens comfort. "We ask in the exam room if they'd like to try another lens. If they're open to trying a daily lens, we'll give them some to try," he says. In fact, he likes to provide patients with some trials so that they can



Dr. Powers

experience the convenience of a daily lens and the comfort of this lens particularly.

INFUSE lenses benefit those patients who struggle with contact lens discomfort. "All patients are candidates, but I particularly present it to any patient who is active, wears contacts for long periods or spends hours on the computer. They'll likely have a great experience with INFUSE," he says.

With the availability of INFUSE for Astigmatism lenses, Dr. Powers says that he now has an excellent option for those toric lens patients who complain of discomfort. "In the past, we have had to resort to lenses that don't quite match their prescription. This lens could be a solution for many of these patients," he notes.

## Removing barriers

Patient rewards sweeten the deal for patients who buy an annual supply of contacts. "We don't price match, but at checkout, we emphasize that if they buy a supply, there's a discount or rebate. We tell them that it means that not only are they not going to run out, it's also a better deal financially."

While Dr. Powers doesn't dive deep into the science behind the materials or the optics with patients, he does highlight the comfort and hydration qualities. "Patients resonate with that more than the optics; they expect me to prescribe a lens that will deliver on optics. Comfort is what sells."

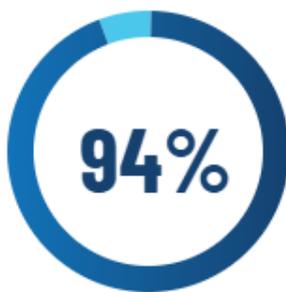
His enthusiasm for the lens brand—and patient reaction to it—has spread among his staff. "Staff has overheard me talking about how much I love these lenses. Then staff started hearing from patients how great their eyes feel. Several employees started wearing them, too. Now, they're telling patients, 'I love these lenses.' The positives sell themselves," he says. It's been a fast and organic growth based on the enthusiastic reactions.

Dr. Powers' personal journey with INFUSE has turned into a shared experience in his practice, helping patients find solutions that keep their eyes comfortable, even at the end of a long day. **PA**

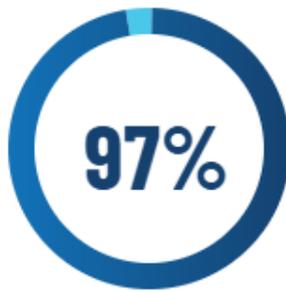
## Patients Who Tried INFUSE® Contacts Agreed†:



94% - They can comfortably wear INFUSE all day



94% - INFUSE helps keep their lenses from feeling dry



97% INFUSE provides crisp, clear vision throughout the day

†Results of an online survey with patients who completed an evaluation program for Bausch + Lomb INFUSE® contact lenses and wore their trial lenses for ≥7 days (n=777). Survey results include patients who strongly agreed, agreed, or slightly agreed (on a 6-point agreement scale) with the surveyed statement, with a margin of error ±1.8%.

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# INNOVATION AND DEDICATION

## Best Practices winner says honor helps her team understand the mission better

**M**elissa McCulley, OD, of McCulley Optix Gallery in Fargo, North Dakota, knew of the CooperVision Best Practices Program. But despite running a successful practice for the past 17 years, she had not applied. "The idea had crossed my mind before, but self-doubt held me back," she admits. However, the opening of a new office with quadruple the space, along with expanding service offerings in the myopia management space gave her the push she needed. "Combining the new practice with the exciting developments in our services, I thought, 'I'm going to apply for this.'"

She was selected as one of the 2024 honorees earlier this year. The process itself was eye-opening, she says. It became an exercise in reviewing and articulating how she and the staff work well together. The recognition is not solely for her but also a testament to the collective efforts of her team, she says.

*"CooperVision has created an amazing program and community for the sake of doctors and practices."*

*— Dr. McCulley*

Meeting the other honorees at the Best Practices Summit was a highlight for Dr. McCulley. "It was amazing to connect with others who are also at the top of their game," she says. The event fostered an environment of learning and sharing among peers. "Talking to people from different practices, we shared insights and learned so much. It was a fantastic experience."

### Pushing boundaries

One of the standout features of Dr. McCulley's practice is its commitment to innovation. "The recognition is not just about longevity in the profession, but it looks at what you are doing to push the boundaries," she says.

Contact lens growth is a focus area.



Dr. McCulley is a 2024 Best Practices winner

She incorporated MiSight® 1 day contact lenses, specifically designed for myopia control<sup>†</sup> and the first and only FDA approved<sup>††</sup> product proven to slow the progression of myopia in children aged 8-12 at the initiation of treatment.<sup>††</sup> "We've been fitting these lenses for about a year, and it's rewarding to see the positive impact on our young patients," she says. The ease of fitting for age-appropriate children<sup>§1,2</sup> and success in helping protect blurry vision from getting worse<sup>¶1,3</sup> make these lenses a valuable addition.

Because she has data and patient experiences to talk about, it's also an easier presentation to parents. "Whenever I see a child whose refractive error has changed, I document it and talk about it. I even plant the seed with parents of very young children if the parents are both high myopes. I stress that there's an intervention we can take that can help the child from following in the parents' footsteps," she says.

She appreciates how much the CooperVision team has supported her practice with staff training and resources that make it easier to adopt new technologies.

### Culture of appreciation

Dr. McCulley says the recognition has given her team an even greater sense of their contributions to the practice's mission, which focuses on offering the best

care without judging patients' financial situations.

She reinforces the value of this approach in weekly staff meetings. "We do shout-outs to celebrate successes," she says. Whether it's a first contact lens fitting or a story of a patient thriving with new eyeglasses, these moments of recognition foster a sense of ownership and pride among the staff.

That culture of appreciation extends to the patients as well. In the daily morning huddle, the staff and doctor review who is coming in that day. "This becomes a way to exceed patient expectations. For example, when the patient comes in, we can say, 'Oh, you were here last week with your older child. How's he doing with his contact lenses?' The patient feels special and seen. We can do that because we reviewed what we know about that patient."

"CooperVision has created an amazing program and community for the sake of doctors and practices," she says. The program is not just a recognition but a catalyst for continued excellence and innovation in the optometric community. "It's bettering all of our practices and fostering a community where we can all practice at the best level." **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.

† Only FDA approved soft contact lens designed for myopia control in the U.S.

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

§ Initial CL BVP selection and observation of fit follows same fitting protocol for single vision CLs; fit success rate same with MiSight® 1 day and Proclear® 1 day.

| MiSight® 1 day, designed for myopia control, shows sustained slowing of eye growth over time on average. While eyes are still growing; children fit ages 8-12 and followed for 6-years. n=40.

¶1 Compared to a single vision 1 day lens.

1. Chamberlain P, et al. A 3-year randomized clinical trial of MiSight® lenses for myopia control. *Optom Vis Sci.* 2019; 96(8):556-567.

2. CVI data on file 2018.

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