

Issue Date: Vision Care Venture January 2009, Posted On: 1/1/2009

INCREASING PROFITS WITH LENS CARE PRODUCTS

As the economy continues to keep consumers and businesses more mindful of where each dollar is going, the practices that you implement now will benefit you long into the future. Discussion, use, and sale of professional lens care products can play a key role in this process.

Caring for the Investment in Eyewear

Think about the purchase of leather furniture or granite countertops. What does the salesperson discuss before the purchase is complete? How to care for the investment, so why should an eyewear sale be any different?

The days of recommending mild soap and water are over. When you recommend mild soap, a consumer interprets this as any common household soap. But professional lens care products are vastly different than those soaps designed for cleaning countertops or glass. And, if it's not common household soap that your patients reach for when cleaning their eyewear, chances are it's their clothing. Over 50% of eyeglass wearers admit using their clothing to clean their lenses, and the scratches are there to prove it.



Liquids and Cleaning Cloths

There are two main types of professional lens care products available—liquid solutions and disposable moist cleaning cloths. Liquid solutions are generally favored for at-home use where multiple users are common and should be paired with a microfiber cloth. They are also ideal for the dirtiest of lenses or situations where a liquid is needed to carry away dirt particles before the lens is rubbed.

Moist cleaning cloths are individually packaged for single use and particularly suitable for convenient, on-demand cleaning needs. They prevent the dirt buildup and subsequent scratching that can occur when using a cloth, tuck easily into a bag, purse, or pocket, and bring consumers back for repeat purchases.

Make the Cleaning Connection

Turning lens care products into a profit center involves a few minutes with each patient and a bit of repetition. It starts in the exam chair. Consumers value what their doctor's tell them. At the time of lens selection, pair up cleaning preferences with the patient's lifestyle. Young children at home? Then towelettes are a must. Woodworking as a hobby? Then liquid is ideal. Always remember to make the cleaning connection.

Lenses are generally cleaned as eyeglasses are dispensed. Take a moment to explain to the patient what you are doing. It only takes two minutes to demonstrate both types of cleaning techniques. Display products at the dispensing table and ask what they prefer.

Finally, ask every customer at checkout if they need care products. Eyeglasses meet the needs of fashion and function. Dirty, smudged lenses not only affect vision but also detract from one's overall appearance.

An Extra \$30,000 Per Year

Turning lens care products into a profit center can be easier than bringing in 100 new patients a year. Imagine selling 500 patients one box of moist cloths priced at \$5.00. That's \$2,500 in sales. Because moist cloths are disposable and habit forming, one box will go quickly. If each of those 500 customers buys six boxes throughout the year, you'll realize additional sales of \$15,000. If they buy a box a month, that's an extra \$30,000 for the year. How many consumers do you see annually? You do the math.

Lens care is a simple consumer process and should be part of a person's daily routine. Brush your hair. Brush your teeth. Clean your glasses. Commit yourself to professional lens care. It not only demonstrates to patients the quality and value of your products, service, and professionalism, but it also ensures customer satisfaction and increased profit as well.

Jodi Groh is Director of Marketing for Nanofilm, which recently launched Clarity Clean It™ in liquid and moist cleaning cloths to clean all lens types, including the latest superhydrophobic AR lenses. Contact feedback@visioncareventure.com with comments and/or suggestions for future topics.