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THE **BIG** TELEMEDICINE QUESTION.

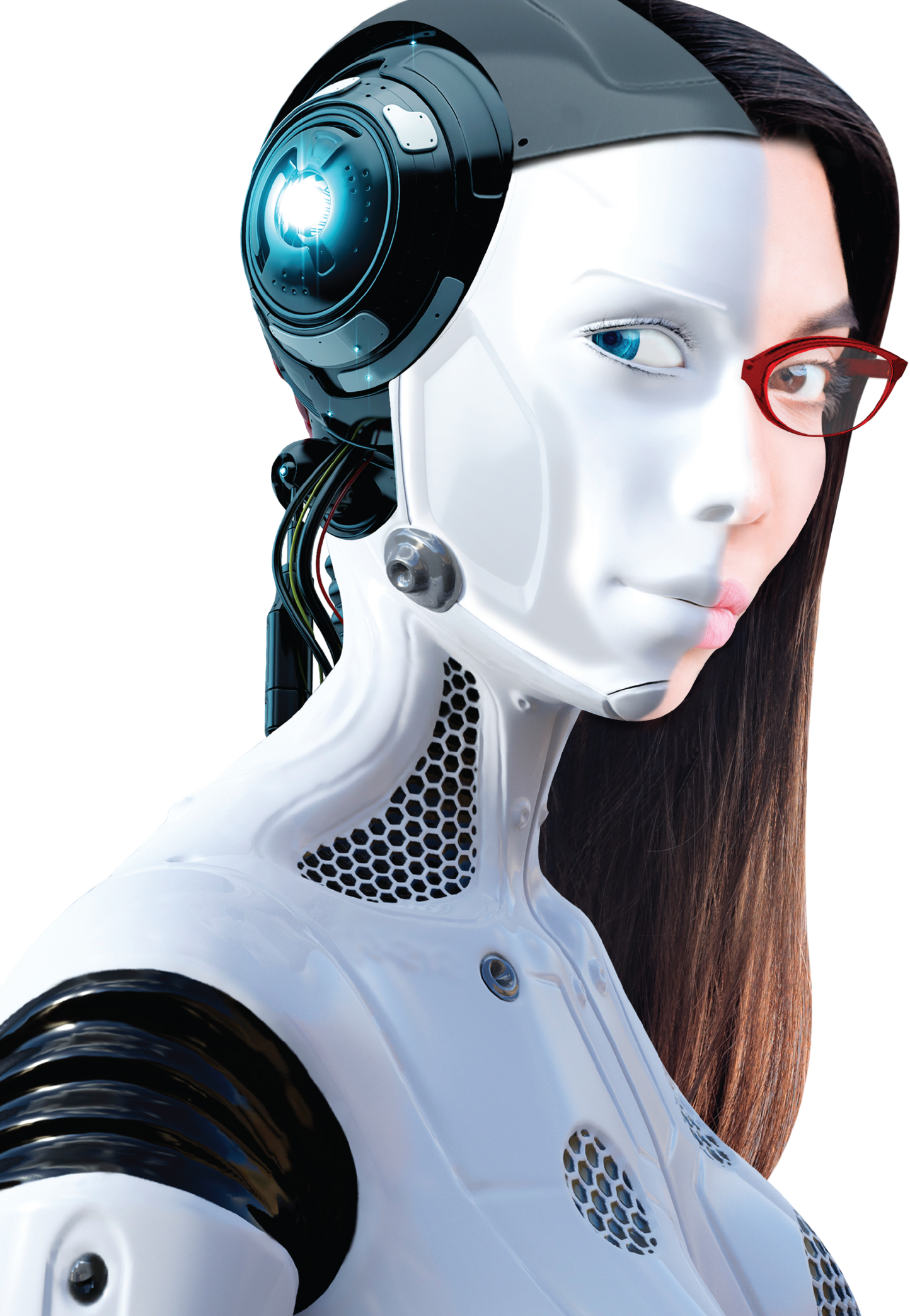
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shaping corporate
optometry? 3 ODs
weigh in.

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Media Into Practice

5 Qs With Former Cole
Vision CEO Jeff Cole

Navigate Vision Expo
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Study Finds Availability of Financing May Impact Patients' Purchasing Behavior¹

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What is Telemedicine in Optometry?

W elcome to the fourth issue of *Corporate Optometry Today!*, where we dig right in to the controversial topic of telemedicine to reveal how some corporate optometrists are approaching this fast-growing reality today.

In our feature article on the topic—Tele-Corporate Optometry?, starting on page 10—our expert Contributing Editor Maria Sampalis, O.D., tells us that “Telemedicine [in optometry] harnesses ad-



- » “decrease in job market”
- » “patient dissatisfaction”
- » and “competing against it in their own corporate sublease.”

In our feature on the topic, we check in with three corporate O.D.s to examine the good, the bad, and the future of telemedicine in optometry. It’s definitely a compelling read.

And, there’s so much more in this content-packed issue of *COT!* On page 14, check out our must-read interview with Jeff Cole, the former chairman and CEO of Cole National Corporation. Today, Cole is still active in GrandVision (which he co-founded as Pearle Europe in 1996) and he’s on the Board of Directors at Safilo and other companies. In this issue, he answers *Corporate Optometry Today!*’s 5 big questions on corporate optometry.

Want more? **Check out our Facebook page: @CorporateOptometryToday!** We hope you enjoy the issue!

“I want to use telemedicine as a service after an in-person baseline exam is established for those who are having office-visit-type problems to really triage and/or treat.”

—*Torrey Carlson, O.D.*, who has five practices affiliated with LensCrafters in Tennessee, tells us in *TeleCorporate Optometry?*, page 10

vancing technology to provide refractions and even full exams outside a traditional optometrist-controlled exam lane.”

Dr. Sampalis also checked in with members of the @CorporateOptometry Facebook group for their thoughts about the use of telemedicine in corporate optometry. Some of the key concerns included:

- » “missing or misdiagnosing medical conditions”
- » “Rx remakes”

Erinn Morgan

Editor-in-Chief + Editorial Director
Corporate Optometry Today! + *Eyecare Business*



In this issue of *COT!*, we dig into the controversial topic of telemedicine, checking in with 3 corporate O.D.s to learn how they are approaching it.



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TREND TRACKER

COT! PINPOINTS THE KEY TRENDS OF INTEREST FOR CORPORATE OPTOMETRISTS



Green Is the Word

One of the Top 10 Retail Trends for 2019 (according to *Stores* magazine) is consumers demanding **transparency regarding a retailer's "green-ness."**

According to forecasters, programs aimed at reducing a brand's or retailer's carbon footprint, having a backstory focused on sustainability and products using recycled materials, and a retailer's green business practices will be rewarded at retail.

Keep that in mind when planning merchandising and marketing.

Several eyewear companies are already on board with this concept, touting their recyclable (or recycled) materials and green business practices. Working in tandem with them—and highlighting those products' claims—can foster goodwill and loyalty from patients. —**Susan Tarrant**

You're Hired

What are the **most sought-after skill sets** in the job market? First off, speak up.

According to LinkedIn's 2018 U.S. Emerging Jobs Report, "Oral communication remains the skill group with the biggest shortage in nearly every city across the country."



The report pinpoints the 10 most in-demand skills (and nearly half are soft skills!) in today's competitive landscape:

1. Oral Communication
2. People Management
3. Development Tools
4. Social Media
5. Business Management
6. Time Management
7. Leadership
8. Graphic Design
9. Data Science
10. Web Development

—**Kerri Ann Raimo**



Pearle Shines

For the 11th year in a row, Pearl Vision has been **recognized as one of the country's top health franchises** by *Entrepreneur* magazine. It's ranked No. 75 on the magazine's "Franchise 500" list, placing it in the top 15% of all franchises. The key factors for consideration are costs and fees, size and growth, support, brand strength, financial strength, and stability.

The ranking comes during a period of growth for Pearl Vision. In 2018, new franchise locations opened across the U.S., including multiple locations in Florida and California.

In early 2019, Pearl Vision plans to open franchises in cities across Pennsylvania, Illinois, Florida, and Ohio, and the brand will continue an aggressive push into Canada. —**S.T.**

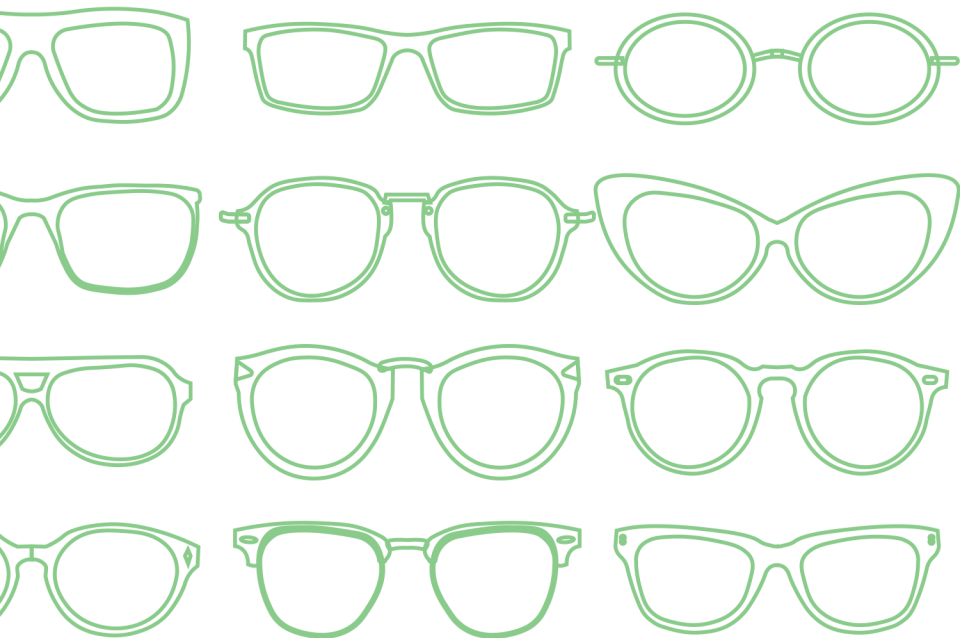


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Learning + Earning

An inside look at the best Vision Expo East has to offer corporate O.D.s

MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

March 21-24 are the dates of this year's Vision Expo East in New York, and the lineup includes a lot of learning opportunities for corporate optometrists. Here's a glance at some of them.

CORPORATE OPTOMETRY

» Career Zone

There's an entirely new destination this year for corporate O.D.s., new grads, and anyone interested in learning more about corporate optometry. Located on Level 1 of the Exhibit Hall, The Career Zone offers a vehicle for corporate optical companies and associations to meet face-to-face with potential hires, such as young professionals and students. The area will be

designed for relaxation, community, and learning.

» Corporate Optometry Panel and Reception

Moderated by Erinn Morgan, editor-in-chief of *Eyecare Business* and *Corporate Optometry Today!*, the panel will take place Saturday, March 23, from 4-5:30 p.m. in the NewGrad-Optometry & CovalentCareers booth (C4067), located in the center of the Career Zone. Engage with the industry's thought leaders to discuss the range of business models in which optometrists can practice corporate optometry today.

Following the panel, enjoy complimentary beverages and networking.

CLINICAL EDUCATION

New clinical courses have been added to the education program. They include:

» A New Myopia Track

Courses present opportunities for clinicians to educate patients, as well as to integrate new prevention methods and strategies to manage and slow the progression of myopia.

» March Madness: Case Challenges in Optometry—Optimizing Ocular Imaging

Panelists will compete against each other by presenting interesting cases highlighting imaging technology. The audience decides who wins via interactive attendee polling technology.

BUSINESS EDUCATION

» The New Innovation Series

Differentiating your business means staying ahead of trends, along with introducing innovative products and services. Explore what's new and next with courses that will help you reimagine the status quo and move your business into the future.

» The Leadership Forum: Inspire, Transform, and Drive Change With Roberto Monaco

The forum will help you increase your leadership effectiveness, eliminate a negative mindset, embrace and implement change, and improve communication skills...and unlock your greatest leadership potential.

» The Business and Practice Expertise Track

Actionable, business-focused content in more than 31 hours of education is related to five key areas: leadership, customer experience, human resources, data, profitability, and growth. A new course of note is Learning the Critical Building Blocks of Your Business. **COT!**

—Stephanie K. De Long

For more info on all that Vision Expo has to offer, go to: visionexpoeast.com.



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TeleCorporate Optometry?

O.D.s weigh the good, the bad,
and future of using telemedicine
in corporate practices

BY MARIA SAMPALIS, O.D.



As it has with countless other businesses and medical fields, new technology will continue to enhance and grow optometry. And the hottest tech button in optometry right now is the growing use of technology for telemedicine purposes.

But the concept isn't completely devoid of controversy.

Many corporate opticals have expressed interest in adopting a telemedicine model to enhance the patient experience—and to provide access in areas that have minimal doctor coverage. Some corporate opticals have

successfully incorporated it into their business model, while others have decided that a traditional in-person exam remains the best model for their practices and patients.

What is telemedicine in optometry? Telemedicine harnesses advancing technology to provide refractions and even full exams outside a traditional optometrist-controlled exam lane. Some of the telemedicine models are performed via an on-site ophthalmic tech. The measurements and tests are done by an ophthalmic tech, and a remote doctor evaluates and signs off on a prescription, if appropriate. If the tests indicate (or if certain age and health requirements are not met), the patient is required to return or seek an optometrist for an in-person eye exam.

[For the purposes of this article, we are defining telemedicine as providing an eye exam that contains more than just a refraction.] →



“Let's properly define telemedicine. It's not an online refraction that is not nearly as accurate as even the basic autorefractor found in an office. The exam must include eye health, external and internal, with IOP.”

—MIKE ELLER, O.D.

Recently I asked members of the @Corporate Optometry Facebook group for their thoughts about the use of telemedicine in corporate optometry. Some of the concerns included:

- ◆ “missing or misdiagnosing medical conditions”
- ◆ “Rx remakes”
- ◆ “decrease in job market”
- ◆ “patient dissatisfaction”
- ◆ “competing against it in their own corporate sublease”

All are valid concerns and questions that need to be answered in order to modify the model and have O.D.s accept it. O.D.s should be involved in these discussions in the industry and set rules and regulations.

Here, we ask three corporate O.D.s to examine the good, the bad, and the future of telemedicine in optometry.

THE GOOD

Telemedicine has several positive uses that can be beneficial in certain areas of optometry.

It can be incorporated into models for mission trips and used in underserved areas. Technology such as Optos and OCT will provide images that can be taken by a tech and reviewed by an optometrist remotely, providing a medical exam to remote areas and access to care to individuals who need it.

Many insurance companies have adapted this method of care and will reimburse O.D.s for the telemedicine eye exam. This can increase revenue for optometrists who are seeking other streams or for the entrepreneurial



“I want to use telemedicine as a service after an in-person baseline exam is established for those who are having office-visit-type problems to really triage and/or treat.”

—TORREY CARLSON, O.D.

O.D. who can't find coverage for their sublease or is looking to expand to multiple locations.



“I want to use telemedicine as a service.”

TORREY CARLSON, O.D.
Five practices affiliated with LensCrafters in Tennessee.



“Standard of care would need to change to allow this...[but it could] compete with an in-person exam.”

MIKE ELLER, O.D.

Associate O.D. adjacent to Walmart in Jacksonville, AR.



Dr. Eller sees the positive side of telemedicine.

“Let’s properly define telemedicine. It’s not an online refraction that is not nearly as accurate as even the basic autorefractor found in an office. The exam must include eye health, external and internal, with IOP,” he notes.

Dr. Carlson says he sees the potential for telemedicine putting a practice at a competitive advantage.

“I want to use telemedicine as a service after an in-person baseline exam is established for those who are having office-visit-type problems to really triage and/or treat. Many, I assume, would be directed in for an in-person exam based on signs and symptoms. But some could be treated (as they are now through the medical tele-sites),” he notes. “I can also see it being used for diabetes monitoring, glaucoma, and macular monitoring. Retinal photos, OCT scans, visual fields, etc., can be done on days with no doctor

DO YOU THINK THE FUTURE OF CORPORATE OPTOMETRY IS IN THE TELEMEDICINE EXAM?

(asked in @Corporate Optometry Facebook group)

of responses ▶

80

NO

19

YES

3

DONT KNOW



“I don’t think anybody, online or in-store, independent or chain, has really figured out how to reach millennials. Everybody talks omnichannel, but eyewear retailers haven’t perfected it yet.”



THE INSIDE LINE... WITH

Jeff Cole

COT! sits down with industry legend + global leader Jeff Cole to answer *COT!*'s 5 questions

BY STEPHANIE K. DE LONG

In this exclusive interview with *Corporate Optometry Today!*, Jeff Cole shares his vision for today's optical market, including how the face of corporate optical is changing.

From 1983 to 2003, Cole was the chairman and CEO of Cole National Corp. "I haven't been sitting under a palm tree since I retired in Florida," he quips. "I'm still active in GrandVision (which I co-founded as Pearle Europe in 1996) and I am on the board of directors at Safilo and Hilco Vision."

COT! had the distinct pleasure of speaking with Cole about the industry and what he sees ahead.

Here, he shares some of those thoughts with us.

MILLENNIALS

Q. What challenges do millennials bring, and how do optical retailers have to adapt?

A. Millennials represent a type of consumer the industry has not faced before—a combination of fashion-oriented, experience-oriented, and green... that is, pure.

I'm not sure that optical retailers, be they independents or chains, understand the category, let alone how to deal with them.

MARKETPLACE

Q. How are optical chains and other retailers responding?

A. What we've seen over the last five to six years is startups that are more online than offline and more sun than prescription. They sell inexpensive, disposable fashion that has some perceived quality, but at a low price. They reach out more through social media than traditional optical.

I don't think anybody in optical retailing, independent or chain, has really figured out how to reach millennials. Everybody talks omnichannel, but eyewear retailers haven't perfected it yet.

CORPORATE

Q. Why are more independents eyeing corporate optometry?

A. It's more and more difficult to be an independent optometrist, and that's making corporate optometry more attractive. Patients are driven by managed care and the advertising and branding of chains. We see a multitude of financial roll-ups of optometric groups thinking they can consolidate practices.

All this is affecting the independent. It's pushing new grads into different directions, including corporate, and it's creating alliances of suppliers and vendor groups being rolled up, too.

CONSOLIDATION

Q. Is consolidation the biggest business-side trend?

A. Yes, the whole industry is in a giant consolidation phase. Over 22 years ago, I was doing the consolidating by buying Pearle. Today, it's mind-boggling what is going on.

The challenge? When you consolidate and create a sameness, you leave room for innovators and startups. The more all eyewear stores have the same products, similar promotions, etc., the more room there is for a 27-year-old to create a differentiating product, business model, or brand positioning and sneak it into the marketplace.

APPEAL

Q. With all this change, what are the biggest draws for corporate optometry now?

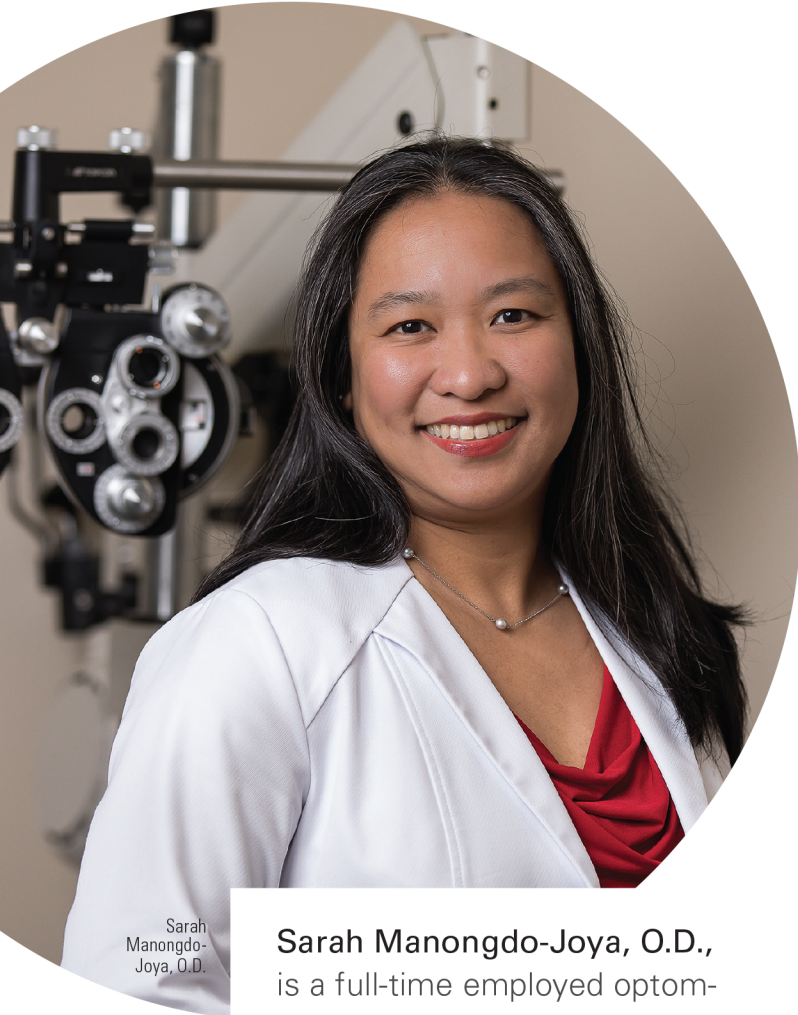
A. One is security, of course. Your business isn't totally dependent on you. The second is the opportunity for optometrists who want to go beyond examining eyes to pursue the business side of both chains and managed care. **COT!**

KEEP READING!

We had more to talk about. Read the entire *COT!* interview with Jeff Cole online at eyecarebusiness.com/supplements/2019/march-2019/corporate-optometry-today!

PUTTING A PASSION FOR SOCIAL MEDIA INTO PRACTICE

Sarah Manongdo-Joya, O.D.



Sarah Manongdo-Joya, O.D.

Sarah Manongdo-Joya, O.D., is a full-time employed optometrist at Visionworks in North Riverside, IL. She's been in corporate practice since graduating from Illinois College of Optometry in 2005. She's married, the mom of two, and *loves* the Internet!



► Learn more about Dr. Manongdo-Joya here: sarahjoya.blogspot.com + [facebook.com/VisionworksNorthRiversideMall](https://www.facebook.com/VisionworksNorthRiversideMall)

1 WHY CORPORATE?
“I enjoy a consistent work schedule, great pay with benefits, a good work-life balance, and support from staff and management at my office. **It allows me to focus on seeing patients,** minus the hassles of owning my own practice.”

2 THE INTERNET
“The Internet is great! I used eBay to supplement my income during optometry school, Match.com to meet the man who became my husband, and shopped eBay for my wedding day. I even wrote a book about that, published by McGraw-Hill, in my fourth year at ICO.”

3 MOMS' GROUPS
“I started promoting my office via area Facebook moms' groups. If, for example, a mom in the group has an eye-related question, I get 'tagged' by the other moms to answer.”

4 FEEDBACK
“Social media allows patients to share their eye exam experience and gives me the ability to respond in real time to concerns or praise. The reviews also provide my office staff with helpful feedback.” **COT!**

—Stephanie K. De Long



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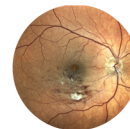
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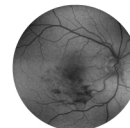
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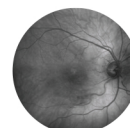
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