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Profitable Practices

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SEPTEMBER 2017



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67
LUSCIOUS
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SPECS

THE **BIG**
VEGAS
SHOW
GUIDE

FALL FASHION

URBAN EDGE

+ THE WILD, WILD WEB

9 SMART WAYS TO
COMPETE WITH ONLINE
RX EYEWEAR SALES

John Varvatos V372 +
Police Wonder 2 SPL 499
sunglass, both from
DeRigo REM

Michael Suliteanu... On Goals + Opportunities Ahead



Michael Suliteanu joined his family's business, then Wescan Optical, in 1990. He has learned the business from the ground up, starting off as a sales representative and moving to vice president, sales in 1998 and then on to president in 2009. He is also on the Board of Directors of The Vision Council.

➔ PLEASE TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT WHAT DEFINES WESTGROUPE.

WestGroupe was founded by my father in 1961, and 56 years later, we are still a family business. The company has been a key player in the Canadian optical industry since the 1960s, and for the last 10 years, WestGroupe has been active on the international stage with our proprietary brands FYSH UK, KLiik denmark, EVATIK, and Superflex.

Although the eyewear category, particularly in the U.S., is dominated by licensed eyewear

brands, we chose to focus our efforts on creating and marketing our own optical collections. By owning these brands, we are able to maintain the integrity of the brand DNA, control product design and quality levels, and assure our customers and our sales team that these brands will always be part of our portfolio.

➔ WESTGROUPE HAS BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED, HIGH-QUALITY PRODUCTS AT A SMART PRICE FOR ECPs—WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY ON THIS NICHE?

I think that today, this segment of the market is no longer a niche. While there are still many consumers who want fashion label eyewear, there is a significant consumer base that is looking for fun, interesting eyewear that speaks to their individual style.

In the past, these types of products were sold at more exclusive eyewear boutiques at high price points. WestGroupe developed KLiik, FYSH, and EVATIK to bring this type of quality product to the ECP at a more affordable price point. This is a market segment that will continue to grow as consumers become more fashion savvy and view eyewear as a fashion accessory.

➔ HOW DO YOU BELIEVE THAT ECPs CAN BEST COMPETE IN TODAY'S UNIQUELY COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE?

In today's crowded and competitive landscape, the independent ECP needs to be able to differentiate themselves from their competition, both brick and mortar as well as online. In today's tech-savvy world, information is just a click away, and the key to standing out is exceptional customer

"In today's tech-savvy world, information is just a click away, and the key to standing out is exceptional customer service and a product assortment that is diverse, interesting, of good quality, and properly priced."

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The ECP needs to be able to respond to how today's consumers shop for products: They want it all, including a large selection to choose from, the latest technology, online shopping availability—but, above all else, they want to be made to feel like they are important, and not just another in a long line of customers.

➔ WHAT'S ON TAP AT WESTGROUPE FOR THE FUTURE?

WestGroupe has seen very healthy double-digit growth for the past 10 years, and we are currently in 40 countries around the globe. Our main focus is to continue to grow our footprint in the U.S. by increasing awareness of our company and our brands and by becoming strong strategic partners with our customers.

It is a challenging business environment for everyone, and we are committed to creating products and services that will help our customers grow. 

—Erinn Morgan

{ MISCELLANEOUS }

Employees of **Carl Zeiss Vision, Inc.**, recently volunteered at the Perkins K-8 School in San Diego's Barrio Logan neighborhood by painting walls/a mural, lining the asphalt play area, organizing classrooms, and unpacking ZEISS-donated sports equipment.

Costa Sunglasses hosted a "Summer Social" party aboard the M/V OCEARCH at North Cove Marina in New York City, celebrating Costa's limited-edition OCEARCH collection.

Santinelli International recently hosted its National Sales Meeting in Philadelphia with a three-day strategic session led by *Rick Clemente*, executive vice president of sales and client services.

Tekā Eyewear has announced its expansion into a new 9,000-square-foot space in Brick, NJ.

Transitions Optical convened a number of eye health and cultural experts to discuss the unique eye health needs of African-American and Hispanic patients during a "Minority Eye Health Matters" panel in conjunction with the 49th annual **National Optometric Association's** Convention and CE Program that was held in Portland, OR, in July.

More than 70 sales representatives from across North America recently gathered at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, TN, for the **WestGroupe** National Sales Meeting. 



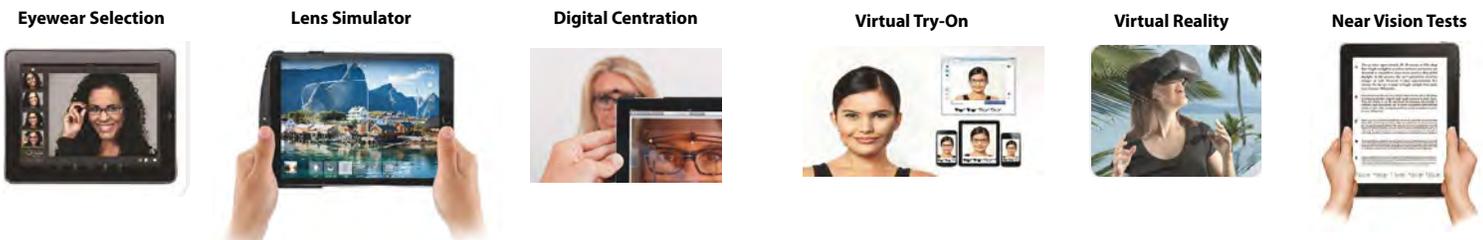
WestGroupe recently hosted its National Sales Meeting in Nashville, TN



From left: Charlotte Parniawski, Edwin Marshall, O.D., Mila Ferrer, Sherrol Reynolds, O.D., and Fayiz Mahgoub at Transitions Optical's Minority Eye Health Matters panel

Are you missing the **wow** factor in your dispensary?

See us at
Vision Expo
West booth
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A conventional product presentation is no longer enough to communicate the benefits of various frames and lens options

Help your patients see and understand eyewear possibilities...



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