

# Can't Miss Trends for 2013



## Consumers Are Demanding Frames That Speak to Their Individuality

BY DEIRDRE CARROLL / SENIOR EDITOR

**NEW YORK**—After a bit of a stylistic lull due to economy-related sameness, finally it seems like there is a bit of buzz and excitement building in the frames segment again.

As Bruce Kolkmann, owner/president of 21 Raymond Opticians in Westchester, N.Y. and surrounding counties, put it, “For a while we were stuck where styling and fashion got boring. Lately, I see as the economy is changing, companies are investing in new things and getting new products out there. The key is to be as well versed in what those

upcoming fads and demands might be; to be on the crest of the wave as opposed to waiting to catch it.” *Vision Monday* felt it was time to explore the major trends for the year ahead so we could help our readers “be on the crest” as it were. And though we could have certainly just told you what the “can’t miss” frame trends are for 2013, we decided to reach out to some people on the front lines—frame buyers, retail executives and store owners—as well as a few creative directors, product folk and designers, to get their feedback on trends for the coming year and what customers are asking for and responding to, in their own words.

Together we’ve identified a few trends already on the rise; like an increased focus on specialty sizes (larger heads, petites, alternative fits, multicultural influences), the increasing use of unique materials in frame construction (Ultem, carbon fiber, wood, horn, various polymers, etc.) and the continuing strength of the retro/geek chic aesthetic, among others. Additionally, we’ve supplemented these strong trends with some good bets to round out your frame boards like color, temple embellishment and philanthropic or “social purpose”-driven brand propositions à la TOMS, 141 Eyewear and Modo’s Eco collection.

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## COVER TOPIC

# Trends 2013: Unique Materials

t's not quite as cut-and-dry as plastic or metal anymore. In an effort to differentiate, eyewear designers are increasingly seeking out new, unique materials, many routinely used outside the optical industry, and consumers are responding. Leather, wood, Ultem, horn, carbon fiber, and various polymers, among other things, used alone or in conjunction with more traditional materials, have become a regular part of the eyewear dialogue. ■

**"Unique materials and treatments continue to really drive client curiosity and sales. Using materials like natural buffalo horn and wood have always been great differentiators for Morgenthal Frederics and continue to be as we enhance and enlarge our assortment in these areas. Mykita Mylon is one of the most exciting new collections in quite some time; utilizing amazing technology to create totally new and innovative eyewear is always fantastic. I think clients want to hear more about how eyewear has advanced, and using unique technology like this, or beautiful natural materials like horn and wood, create the kind of offerings that keep them excited about eyewear."**

**— JEFF PRESS, vice president of design and merchandising, Luxury Optical Holdings (LOH)**

"Companies are using different materials. One in particular no longer uses plastic, but instead uses pressed cotton. There are more companies using different types of plastics than before to make their frames a little different, a little lighter."

**— AURORA SUSI, frame buyer, Metro Optics**

**"Tumi uses carbon fiber, John Varvatos has genuine leather, Converse**



**features skateboard grip-tape, Lucky has silk screen acetate... and this is just the beginning of unique materials at REM. By bringing in surprising materials, the frames better represent the individual's lifestyle and personal style and speak to the wearer in a way that is unique and special."**

**— NICOLAS ROSEILLIER, creative director, REM Eyewear**

"Utilizing materials in frames that are traditionally outside of our industry is a growing trend and something Pearle Vision buyers have seen in a variety of the collections. The innovation and technology continues to provide customers with more choice and a product that will enhance the look and performance of the frames."

**— LORI BOWMAN, director of frame buying at Pearle Vision, Luxottica Retail**

**"I love exploring new materials but this can be a slippery slope as we can all get seduced by new materials just for the sake of saying they're new. At Marchon, we ask— 'how can I achieve the special effect or function I'm looking for? What material could solve that for me?' A great example of this are styles from Calvin Klein collection. Inspired from the brand's minimalist construction and clean layering, we wanted to create a 'frame within a frame' with both metal and plastic that was seamless, elegant yet lightweight. Through research we discovered a process that allows a metal frame to be completely encased in an outer perfectly crystal casing. This new material is a polyurethane polymer that is poured over the metal frame in a cold state instead of traditional method of heat under injection, creating a very clear and polished effect."**

**— LESLIE MULLER, vice president of design, Marchon**

# Can't Miss Frame Trends

## Trends 2013: Specialty Sizing

**M**ore and more, size matters. Additional attention to age, gender, scale, temple length and bridge construction are increasingly addressing the needs of petite wearers, folks with larger heads and a variety of ethnic and multicultural bridge variations called everything from Asian fit, to Global and Universal fit, to the more encompassing Specialty fit. ■

**"Sizing of frames has become very important from both ends of the spectrum—larger sizes for both men and women, petite sizes especially for women, special fits (low bridge fit/Asian or African American fit) and even larger children's frames for little ones that aren't so little anymore."**

**— TIMM PARKER, vice president of merchandising for domestic brands, Viva International**

"In recent years, we have seen Pearle Vision customers request unique frame sizes. No two customers are the same so it's important that our frame assortment meets those needs with a selection that is available in different sizes from petite to extended eye sizes and temples."

**— LORI BOWMAN, Pearle Vision**

**"We are seeing specialized fit stories within collections such as adjustable nose-pads on zyl frames for a perfect Asia fit segmentation."**

**— DAVID DURALDE, chief creative officer, Kenmark Group**

"The trends are slightly larger frames. Narrow frames that were 20, 25 B measurements were inundated in the market everywhere, all throughout younger and older ages. For people in their 20s

and people in their 40s who need progressives, bigger frames are working much, much better. Narrow frames are been there, done that."

**— DAN DEUTSCH, owner, DD Optical Outlook**

**"We've found that perfect design and materials mean little if the fit is not right. In an effort to provide quality eyewear to a range of faces, REM introduced larger and smaller sizes. You see it best in our Jones New York collections where JNY Men will now feature bigger sizes (55-58) while JNY Petite focuses on flattering delicate features."**

**— NICOLAS ROSEILLIER, REM Eyewear**

"There is a lot of attention being paid to an Asian fit. Lindberg back in the '80s was one of

the first that came out with different bridges. I believe the Asian population is increasing in the U.S. and manufacturers are seeing a void there and trying to fill it."

**— BRUCE KOLKMANN, owner/president, Raymond Opticians**

**"We typically offer a range of sizing, so a design might come in two shapes—a progressive-friendly, larger shape and a sister shape might be a smaller eyesize like a 47 or 49 for a more petite fit. With Nike we targeted some of our best-selling adult styles and resized them for the young athlete. Not only was the eyesize reduced but extensive fit research and field testing was conducted with test subjects from 4th to 9th grade for the perfect fit."**

**— LESLIE MULLER, Marchon**



## COVER TOPIC

# Trends 2013: Retro/Geek Chic

**M**ake room, Buddy Holly, the naughty librarian wants her due too. Yeah, the retro/geek chic trend is not going anywhere anytime soon. However, it has evolved over the last few seasons to reflect a lighter, more streamlined aesthetic, the addition of more feminine silhouettes (hello cat eye!) and the rise of the round to add a bit of freshness to this classic 'everything old is new again' trend. ■

**"Cat eye styling for women in ophthalmic and suns, and in both zyl and metal. We are seeing the modernized versions of what the late 1950s and early 1960s made so popular. Styles like those featured in the movie *The Help* have resonated with women in our area."**

**- AARON SCHUBACH, vice president/owner, Standard Optical**

"The younger market is embracing eyewear these days and is still tending toward the Buddy Holly/geek chic look that has been growing in popularity over the past couple of years."

**- TIMM PARKER, Viva International**

**"The next evolution of the 'geek chic' phenomenon continues to influence the eyewear category. Customers are drawn to unique, cool and oversized retro shapes from many brands this season. And while we first saw the trend on male celebrities like Justin Bieber and professional basketball players, both men and women have embraced the style. Everything from oversized frames, to soft cat eyes and round shapes is giving our customer the 'retro geek chic' look they want."**

**- LORI BOWMAN, Pearle Vision**

"Vintage done in larger shapes and round is a big shape this year."

**- CYNTHIA SHAPIRO, creative director, Europa International**

**"Round frames continue to be a driving trend for us. Morgenthal has always specialized in round frames, but the clients willing to try this distinctive look continues to grow and works great for both sun and optical. Cat eyes continue to be very important, as retro styling continues to grow in popularity. It truly comes back to clients wanting a wardrobe of eyewear, so they can achieve different looks to suit their overall moods."**

**- JEFF PRESS, LOH**

"What's trending now is geek chic, a lot of large, plastic frames. Cat eye shapes, black, not

the goth look but the geek look. What people wanted in the '70s has circled back around. Females, men, even children are getting the square, plastic, large size frames."

**- SHARRON SANCHEZ, store manager, Metro Optics**

**"For women, we are seeing with most brands, a cat eye shape being offered as well as larger round and square shapes in both ophthalmic and sun. For men, we are seeing a heavy zyl trend, but also a resurgence of popularity in metals, specifically heavier looking, lightweight metals. Men like the look of the thicker, plastic frame, but they are looking for something a little different, hence the 'heavy metal.'"**

**- CINDY KEIL, director of purchasing and office planning, Eye Care Associates**



# Can't Miss Frame Trends

## Trends 2013: Color

**"Color, color, color! Converse and Lucky Brand have a great showing of this; even Tumi and John Varvatos get in on this trend. It's such a fun moment for color. It allows for a classic design with a different spin."**

— NICOLAS ROSEILLIER, REM Eyewear

**"More color and color blocking."**

— CYNTHIA SHAPIRO, Europa International

**"Color has been another huge trend. Customers recognize that eyewear is the perfect accessory to add a pop of color to their look. We've noticed more**

**and more customers are taking a risk and going for a look different than classic black, tortoise or traditional metal colors. Brightly colored flat metals, multi-layered acetates—nothing is off limits."**

— LORI BOWMAN, Pearle Vision

**"Customers want color, new colors, innovative combinations of color. We continue to see innovation and new technology in terms of printing on acetate and metals. After a great deal of research and development the print houses are finding ways to create 3D print effect for patterns through complex, custom laminations**



of the acetate. For metals, there are new print transfer techniques that make the prints look more integrated to create more balance."

— DAVID DURALDE, Kenmark Group

## Trends 2013: Temple Embellishment

**"We're also seeing a lot of unique different temple treatments, hand painted stuff, neat looking foil applications."**

— BRUCE KOLKMANN, Raymond Opticians

**"Embellishments on the temple are very popular. Whether it's a logo detail, bows or jewels, the temple of the frame is calling for more attention. The Pearle Vision customer loves the detail and the special attention to the design with this trend."**

— LORI BOWMAN, Pearle Vision

**"I also am beginning to see the emergence of shiny-sparkly again; whether translated into the traditional crystal stones or into some of the newer effects like glitter epoxy or glitter acetate."**

— TIMM PARKER, Viva International

**"People are interested in simple, almost mellow fronts, but are willing to take risks with the temples—triple laminate zyl, fine detail and bright colors."**

— AARON SCHUBACH, Standard Optical



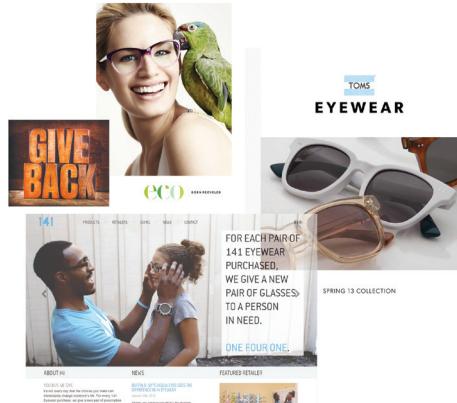
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## Can't Miss Frame Trends

## Trends 2013: Philanthropic Positioning

"REM's CEO Mike Hundert often says, 'Companies that do well should also do good.' He really stands behind that through company-sponsored volunteer events, monetary donations to eyewear-related causes and now with philanthropic product positioning. We can't say much now because it is still in the works, but REM is planning to extend our philanthropic spirit to our eyewear collections. Serving more than 80 nations, REM is a global citizen and takes that responsibility very seriously."

**- NICOLAS ROSEILLIER, REM Eyewear**



**"We are seeing more companies trying to make philanthropic offerings, and I would definitely embrace that. That's on the cusp of emerging on the market as mainstream. My advice on that is to do your due diligence, research it and make sure they're following through with their end of the bargain."**

**- BRUCE KOLKMANN, Raymond Opticians**

## No One Wants to Look Like Everyone Else'

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Across them all, one of the most noteworthy and overarching sentiments retailers and suppliers alike kept coming back to was the idea of "individualism."

"With globalism, e-commerce and social media, consumers are increasingly more savvy and educated as to what is available," said Leslie Muller, vice president of design for Marchon. "The result is no one wants to look everyone else. Consumers are

looking for the thrill of 'the find.' They want something unique and different."

"Design is becoming more human-centered and responsive to an individual's drive to be more self-expressed and original," according to David Duralde, chief creative officer for the Kenmark Group. "This is why we are seeing designs that speak to specific fit and color demands, or designs that address social responsibility head on."

And, according to Cindy Keil, director of purchas-

ing and office planning for 24 Eye Care Associates, with locations in the greater Raleigh-Durham-area, the dynamic of individualism provides a perfect opportunity for retailers to shine. "Most of our customers come in saying that they want something 'different.' However, most of them aren't sure of what that would be, so we get to do what we do best—choose styles to update their look for them." ■

*—With contributions from Catherine Wolinski and Marge Axelrad*

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## Unique Materials

(page 34)  
Frames photos courtesy of Ogi Evo-Tec (top right) and Mykita Mylon (bottom left).



## Retro/Geek Chic

(Page 36)  
Brand images courtesy of (clockwise from top center) William Morris London, SPY, Morgenthal Frederics, MarchoNYC and SPY. Frame image courtesy of GEEK Eyewear from LBI.



## Temple Embellishment

(page 37, bottom)  
Frame image courtesy of Jimmy Crystal from A&A Optical.



## Specialty Sizing

(page 35)  
Frame photos courtesy of Bally Special Fit from L'Amry America (right, top and bottom) and BCBG Global Fit from ClearVision (top left).



## Color

(page 37, top)  
Frame images courtesy of Airlock from Marchon (top right) and pq eyewear by Ron Arad (bottom left).



## Philanthropic Positioning

(page 38)  
Brand images courtesy of (clockwise from top center) eco by Modo, TOMS Eyewear and 141 Eyewear.