

Innovation Drives Rx Safety Programs

Offering Customized Eye Protection Solutions for ECPs and Their Patients



Image Credit: Getty Images / Jetta Productions Inc, Hybrid Images, sents

BY SARAH MCGOLDRICK / CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

NEW YORK—Each year, millions of Americans suffer severe eye injuries and even blindness associated with workplace accidents. According to 2023 Bureau of Labor statistics, there were 18,510 eye-related injury or illness cases that resulted in at least one day away from work in 2020, leading to an incidence rate of 1.7 cases per 10,000 full-time workers.

This doesn't only affect the productivity of the business but also has an impact on the bottom line. A report from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) finds that workplace eye injuries cost nearly \$300 million in lost productivity, worker compensation and medical treatment.

A study exploring the trends in workplace-related eye injuries in the U.S. found that men were the most likely to receive an eye injury at a rate of 77 percent versus 23 percent of women. Young people between the ages of 25 and 44 accounted for 62 percent of eye injuries. People who worked in the service and production industries were also at a greater risk of injury, at 23 percent and 18 percent, respectively.

Most eye injuries result from flying shards of metal or glass, tool slips or chemicals. Protective eyewear can prevent 90 percent of workplace-related eye injuries. Education, (<https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/injuries-work>) paired with the right eye protection,

is key to reducing the number of injuries. This is why major Rx safety suppliers and laboratories have developed innovative solutions to provide the highest level of eye protection.

Through these partnerships, ECPs can serve the Rx Safety eyewear needs of patients by providing education on protection while performing work-related tasks. Rx Safety suppliers and their partner labs can also be a resource for this specialized area of prescription eyewear.

In this article, *Vision Monday* highlights some of the top Rx Safety eyewear programs and resources available to eyecare professionals. ■

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SafeVision by Hoya Offers Eyewear Protection as Employers Expand Safety Requirements

The shift to provide workers with better protection on the job has been felt at Hoya. The SafeVision by Hoya (www.hoyavision.com) program has seen a post-COVID surge in growth as employees head back to in-person manufacturing jobs. “There has been a significant shift across a multitude of industries to ensure that workers are well-protected while on the job, even across many job functions where safety eyewear has not been historically required,” said Bruce Scott, vice president of Hoya Global Safety and Hoya wholesale division.

“SafeVision is proud of our continued support of independent eyecare professionals through our partnership with more than 8,000 ECPs across North America,” he said.

He noted, this shift is beginning to yield new cultures where companies do not simply do what is required by Occupational Safety and Health Administration, but are striving to exceed standards to provide their employees with the best protection, in turn aiding with employee satisfaction, retention and an overall sense of well-being for the individual.

To meet this challenge, SafeVision’s best-in-class Pentax prescription safety frame line continues to grow with new styles every year, with two new styles scheduled to be launched in the next few months.

The company said the Pentax Ravn, launching in early 2024, is a non-conductive, prescription-ready safety frame with integrated side shields. The lightweight frames feature a rubber overmold on the temple tips for added grip and adjustable nose pads to improve fitting. The soft touch brow bar helps keep falling debris away from the eyes, plus the frame front and temples feature indirect venting to reduce fogging.

It will be available in one size and three colors: Black with Yellow accents, Black with Gray accents, and Clear with Blue accents. The Ravn meets ANSI Z87.1 standards for high mass/velocity impact resistance as well as CSA Z94.3 safety



The SafeVision Ravn frame.

standards for Canada.

The Pentax Attitude 7, also launching in early 2024, is a hybrid metal design featuring a soft touch brow-bar with built in, adjustable nose pads. This helps keep out debris and ensures a proper fit that’s comfortable to wear all day long. The rubber temple tips keep them from slipping while engaging in rigorous tasks.

Crystal clear, polycarbonate side shields are permanently attached and perfectly compliment the modern styling of this unique design. It will be launched in two sizes and two colors: Matte Gunmetal with Black/Gray accents and a Matte Brown with Black/Gray accents.

“More than ever before, today’s eyecare professionals are being challenged to maximize every single patient opportunity,” Scott said. “The increasing manufacturing labor market across the U.S. and Canada has meant that prescription safety eyewear continues to be an extremely important opportunity for ECPs.”

Scott noted, a prescription safety eyewear patient can carry many additional revenue opportunities for an independent eyecare professional, as these patients often need a new refraction. He added, they will normally need new dress eyewear or prescription sunwear, and they may have a spouse or children who need eyewear.

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“These opportunities are often the result of a local manufacturing employer sending their employees to local eyecare professionals, and additional foot traffic is often the one thing most desired by a business owner,” Scott said. ■

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Art-Craft Market Analysis Tailors Bespoke Safety Eyewear Solutions

Art-Craft (www.artcrafoptical.com) has been a pioneer in prescription safety eyewear for more than 25 years. The USA Workforce Collection and recently added Hudson Safety Line feature plastic and metal frames for men and women with tasteful styling and fashionable colors, something that has continuously driven business growth.

Art-Craft vice president Charlie Eagle, told *VM*, the company has recently seen double-digit growth with the addition of more modern styling in Rx Safety with the USA Workforce Collection and filling white spaces in the market with the Hudson Safety Line which was acquired by Art-Craft in 2021.

Art-Craft began manufacturing protective eyewear during World War I, in Rochester, N.Y., when founder Charles Eagle began selling combat eye-

wear to U.K. and Canadian Troops. He then began selling to American soldiers for trench warfare and pilots flying over war zones. Art-Craft is the oldest U.S. eyewear manufacturer and has been in continuous production and family owned since its founding. He said the Art-Craft Rx team can review and conduct an analysis for ECP, wholesale and brick-and-mortar chains to help them find the right Rx solutions for their customers.

“We have been working with several brick-and-mortar chains to help them understand the Rx Safety business by running market analysis for them, reviewing their selections, identifying gaps and redundancies, and working to maximize their opportunity in the Rx Safety space,” said Charlie Eagle.

Art-Craft is committed to supporting American Made eyewear to ensure no components or manufacturing functions are displaced by outsourcing. ■



New Conductive caters to patients looking for a modern, comfortable, XL frame that has excellent side peripheral vision.



Female Fashion Colors Non-Conductive.



Popular Hudson Non-Conductive.

Bollé Safety Eyewear Offers a Turnkey Solution to Vision Protection

Bollé (www.bolle.com) Safety launched the Corporate Safety Rx program in 2023 to meet the needs of their industrial customers and expand their customer base.

“We are delighted with the early results that we’re seeing and are looking forward to adding new customers,” said Ryan Pappas, national account manager Rx for Bollé Safety North America. “This is a new segment for Bollé Safety, as we just launched a new Corporate Safety Rx program earlier this year to meet the needs of our industrial customers. It provides reassurance that every employee who receives Bollé safety prescription eyewear will always have the correct PPE eyewear that is required for their specific work environment.”

He said Bollé ECP partners are finding huge value in offering their Excellence Safety program with additional revenue for fitting and dispensing services, along with the real value in new customer acquisition. “We can literally send a consistent flow of employees into their practice with the opportu-



PXFKURT206R KURT4.

nity to convert them to long-term patients and sell additional products and services, and we’ll pay the ECP to do it.”

Pappas told *VM*, eyecare professionals are asking for resources to better service the safety prescription market. He added that the Corporate Safety Prescription program was designed to solve that problem, offering access to a fluid and automated process that is easy to use and delivers pre-



KLASSEE KLASSE-B810-2.

scription safety glasses within a week of the order being placed.

Bollé Safety eyewear is available in nearly 30 different styles across a wide range of safety eyewear segments, including the Kurt, which features a sporty look and is designed to be extremely comfortable. Bollé also recently introduced the Klassee, featuring a bi-material blue frame made with castor oil. It is Bollé’s first sustainable Rx model. ■

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EssilorLuxottica SightProtect Pairs Trusted Brands With Putting Safety First

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 2,000 U.S. workers sustain an eye injury every day. Nearly one-third of these injuries require hospitalization. Additionally, nearly 100 injuries require more than a day off work. This is costly to both production and the bottom line. The SightProtect program from EssilorLuxottica (www.essilorluxottica.com) was developed in 2021 to give eyecare providers a wide range of safety eyewear options for customers.

“It gives provider partners access to key aspects of the EssilorLuxottica integration, including a white-label version of EyeMed’s EyeManage platform, which drives the SightProtect program,” said Tory Olson, director of the safety eyewear division at EssilorLuxottica. “This familiar interface makes looking up benefits, placing orders, and checking on the financial components of participating in a managed safety eyewear program much easier and

streamlined for the providers than our competitors can offer.”

He told *VM*, providers are asking for ways to simplify how their offices participate in safety programs with customized solutions while still giving them access to trusted brands such as Oakley frames, Crizal coatings, Varilux lenses and Transitions.

“SightProtect was born of a need to simplify safety prescription eyewear to maximize practice efficiency and unlock this profitable revenue stream for practices. The program provides access to our industry-leading technologies and brands and creates efficiency through end-to-end online management and standardized safety benefit plans,” he said.

“SightProtect provides eyecare professionals with a turnkey safety eyewear solution and drives incremental patients and income directly to participating practices,” Olson concluded. ■



Oakley's SightProtect program.

Hilco Vision's OnGuard Blends World-Class Style With ANSI/CSA Rated Protection

When ECPs think of safety eyewear, Hilco (www.hilcovision.com) is likely one of the first companies to come to mind. The company has continued to offer innovative safety prescription eyewear solutions that not only offer on-the-job protection but also address the safety needs of lifestyle activities.

“More customers are realizing that comprehensive eye protection, based not only on occupation but also lifestyle activities, represents additional revenue opportunities for them as well as a higher level of care for their patients,” said Donna Geruso, product manager, Rx Sport & Safety at Hilco. “Thanks to the talented in-house design and engineering teams, OnGuard was proud to introduce new styles inspired by one of the most iconic shapes in eyewear, like the clubmaster.”

Geruso said, more eyecare professionals recognize that protecting a patient’s priceless vision goes beyond the annual exam. The more they are engaging with their patients to learn



Classic Clubmaster C213 is inspired styling featuring acetate with stainless steel. It is available in Black/Gunmetal & Tortoise/Gold.

how else they can become partners for long-term eye health and protection. She added that asking questions about lifestyle, work and hobbies can lead to a frank discussion about the need to make eye safety a priority during activities that may prove dangerous.

“A second ‘prescribed’ pair of Rx Safety eyewear protects expensive fashion frames in addition to keeping eyes safe any time there is a risk of impact, debris, dust or chemical exposure. It’s really a win-win for both the patient and the practice.”



The retro look influenced by clubmaster style C214 features acetate front with stainless steel. It is available in Black/Black & Tortoise/Gold. Both frames are available with patented EZ shield side shield which allows a detachable or permanent shield feature with ONE shield.

Recommending a two-fold approach of show and tell, Geruso said bringing patients on board starts with ensuring safety eyewear is displayed or at least has visible signage to highlight this offering.

“Next, ask questions. Having a better understanding of what your patient does for everyday work, projects around the home, or hobbies to relax will not only build a stronger personal connection between patient and practice but also will easily open the conversation to the possible need for Rx Safety eyewear.” ■

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Kenmark's Wolverine Rx Taps Into New Workplace Demographics

This year marked an uptick in safety eyewear sales within independent channels for Kenmark Eyewear (www.kenmarkeyewear.com) as it continues to diversify its offerings for traditional and new safety eyewear markets.

"One change over the years is the customer requiring safety, with more women working in the manufacturing space," said Jason Wehlage, vice president of product and design.

A changing and more diverse workforce means both employers and eyewear designers need to continuously offer new and innovative designs.

He noted, this means utilizing sales teams to educate ECPs about customer-focused options. "It is incumbent upon our sales team to highlight the benefits in offering a select assortment within ECPs, specifically in areas that feature manufacturing hubs."

Wehlage noted that Wolverine has a selection of pieces with colors and shapes to cater to the female demographic, including the lightweight and sporty Wolverine Wo36 and Wo35.

"As products continue to be sourced more locally and the onshoring of manufacturing expands, an assortment of safety eyewear can help to differentiate ECPs and draw a demographic that may not have been realized," he said. ■



Wolverine Safety Eyewear Wo35 + Wo36 come in assorted colors.



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Walman Optical Safety Program Makes Vision Protection Accessible to Employers

Ensuring the environmental health and safety of employees is one of the key drivers behind Walman Optical's (www.walmanoptical.com) Industrial Safety Program.

"The prescription safety eyewear market is thriving. More and more companies are focusing on environmental health and safety in all aspects for the well-being of their employees. Naturally, safety eyewear comes to the surface when companies evaluate required needs and make improvements to keep the workforce safe on the job and retain their employees too," said Meg Klaers, industrial safety program manager at Walman, and Jeff Marcella, industrial safety sales manager.

They told *VM*, companies are updating their corporate safety eyewear programs, or for many, they're starting programs for the first time. Walman is able to continually meet the demand of the prescription safety eyewear market with program enhancements and personalized customer service to both employer customers and eyecare practices alike.

"We make thoughtful updates to our in-house portfolio and industry-leading technology to keep the cost of prescription safety eyewear affordable and make the process as easy as possible for employees, companies and eyecare practices. These improvements also allow us to continue manufacturing safety eyewear at the highest quality," Klaers and Marcella added.

"As eyecare practices look to expand their offering to their marketplace, safety eyewear is gaining ground. What's old is new again, especially because safety frame manufacturers are coming out with style improvements to ANSI Z87.1 rated safety frames; these are not your grandpa's safety glasses any longer."

Walman has developed solutions that make safety part of the overall vision health journey. Klaers and Marcella added, "Safety is a gateway to revenue. Our safety programs are incredibly well-rounded in the sense that we focus on pairing the right eyecare practice with the employer to



Wiley X Specter is a Q4 release with a new detachable or permanent side shield system.



Armourx 5003 is a classic wrap in clear for style and an unobstructed visual field.

Invincible by Zyloware IP103Z is a modern twist on a traditional frame with permanent side shields.

increase eye exams and additional eyewear orders outside of safety."

As the safety eyewear industry continues to grow, Walman works with employers to meet their needs and make protecting employees accessible. "There will always be a need for prescription safety eyewear, and because it is a medical device, the U.S. workplace needs care and guidance from eyecare professionals. When you make safety eyewear accessible to your community, accept that it isn't going to be your primary form of revenue, and use our resources to turn it into something more. You will stand out from your competition as you provide an important service to your patients," Klaers and Marcella concluded. ■

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Wiley X Safety Eyewear Creates Gateway to New Markets

The U.S. safety glasses industry was valued at just over \$903 million in 2022, making it a vital part of any eyecare provider's bottom line. Wiley X (www.wileyx.com) safety eyewear has seen strong year-over-year growth and demand with both key partners and eyecare providers.

The company's WXRx Digiforce line presents the wide range of styles and technology options available. It offers the highest Rx range in the sport wrap safety industry.

"All of our digital Rx's are accommodated and compensated to POW. Our use of shaped lenticular designs (DET) or digital edge thinning allows us to wrap style 8 base ranges from +5.00, -7.00 and YF and WS styles from +6.00, -10.00," said Ray T. Hill IV, vice president of sales at Wiley X. "We offer a wide array of polarized and photochromic options featuring our proprietary Captivate color-enhancing polarized lens.

Hill told *VM*, the company has developed safety eyewear that functions both indoors and outdoors with premium-quality ANSI Z87.1+ high-impact safety standards. He said Wiley X eyewear is safety and lifestyle blended, creating multiple uses for all indoor and outdoor activities.

"ECPs can benefit in a myriad of ways with a dedicated safety program, including occupational health programs, community outreach, first responders and law enforcement," he said. "Safety programs can be the gateway to an entirely new market that is both lucrative and reliable. A good safety program can make you the 'go-to' doctor in town and may lead to further partnerships and sponsorships," Hill said. ■



The WX Chase combines the best of both worlds: a lightweight and stylish design, with maximum protection. It comes equipped with permanent and removable side shields to meet ANSI Z87.1+ safety standards.



The sleek, rectangular build of its lightweight frame offers a comfortable yet flattering fit, combined with removable and permanent side shields for an ANSI Z87.1+ safety rating when you need it.



The WX Gravity is a strong and reliable pair of glasses designed for performance in the harshest work environments. It meets ANSI Z87.1+ safety standards and includes a removable gasket to block out dust and debris.

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Zyloware to Launch Invincible Safety Eyewear in March

With more than 100 years of experience in the optical industry, Zyloware (www.zyloware.com) has established itself as a leader in vision protection. In March of 2024, the company will be launching its legacy brand Invincible Safety Eyewear, offering quality protective eyewear for men and women working in hazardous environments.

“Always listening carefully to the market, Zyloware has been developing industrial safety products needed now—high quality at an approachable price,” said Zyloware president Chris Shyer. “We are excited to offer eyewear in the safety category, along with the same high level of service that providers can always expect from Zyloware. It comes with our 100 years of expertise to confidently serve the wearer. The initial styles are non-conductive, and additional needs will be filled soon.”

According to the company, Invincible Safety Rx Eyewear meets the ANSI Z-2+ standards for occupational eyewear, making it a reliable choice for eye protection where safety eyewear is required. The IP101Z and IP102Z models are non-conductive eyewear, entirely free of metal parts, which the company said makes them indispensable in electrical industry settings and any environment with arc flash potential.

The lightweight design of IP103Z adheres to the stringent ANSI Z87-2+ standards, ensuring both men and women can sport fashionable and comfortable eyewear while effectively safeguarding their vision in today’s modern workplace.

A wide selection of design options allows employers to have custom safety options for their employees. Materials include injected-molded plastics, metal and stainless steel in both shiny and matte finishes. Metal styles also feature signature detailing on both classic and on-trend fashionable shapes, while plastic styles feature non-conductive, wraparound designs in three unisex sizes with a dust dam and retention head strap.



Invincible Safety style 102Z.



Invincible Safety style 101Z.



The IP102Z and IP101Z styles are unisex eyewear options from the newly introduced Invincible Safety collection by Zyloware. Specifically designed as non-conductive models, these styles are equipped with a dust dam and a secure retention head strap for added comfort and protection.

“Judging by the reactions of retailers who have viewed the new collection, the Invincible name will once again become a powerhouse within the optical industry, just as it was for Bob and Henry Shyer and their introduction of the first nylon frame, which sold over 30 million units,” said Chris Shyer. ■

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