

## Modern Optics



### ACEP's Smart Mirror Helps Dispensers Sell Features and Benefits of Products

#### Bard Optical

Peoria, Illinois

Digital Technology Snapshot: Smart Mirror

*Bard Optical, an optical retail chain that operates 21 stores in central Illinois, has been using ACEP's Smart Mirror system for several years. Company vice president, Mick Hall, first learned about ACEP's Smart Mirror system during a visit with another retailer that belongs to the same information sharing group as Bard.*

*He recalls being impressed with Smart Mirror's ease of use and multi-functional design, which lets dispensers use an iPad to take accurate patient measurements and demonstrate lenses in a way that vividly illustrates their features and benefits. Now Smart Mirror is an integral part of Bard's dispensing process, and both staff and patients appreciate how the system's advanced capabilities can make the eyewear selection process easier.*

#### Mick Hall, Vice President and General Counsel, Bard Optical

"We looked at Smart Mirror for two different opportunities. One was measurement. Prior to Smart Mirror we were using pupilometers and PD sticks, the tried and true methods for measuring.

The other opportunity was for demonstrating products such as AR or polarized. We would have different demonstration aids and information given to us by the vendors, but there was no central location for it. We also wanted the ability to take a photograph of someone and show them how they look in a new frame after they put their original glasses back on.

When I first saw a dispenser using Smart Mirror I was complete blown away by the ease with which they were taking measurements and the depth of information available with the product demonstrations, particularly for polarized and AR lenses. The way that they were able to show me what those products can do for a patient was so revolutionary to me, because they used videos, not some card



Mick Hall

*Optician Gabby Whitman uses Smart Mirror to demonstrate lens options to a patient at Bard Optical's Knoxville Ave. office in Peoria, Illinois.*

or static photograph.

When you say to a patient, 'I want you to spend some extra money to get this high index lens because it's going to make your lens thinner, people have no idea what you mean by thinner. So to be able to show them a cross section comparing a high index lens to a poly lens, using their exact prescription, is huge. I've had staff members who have said polarized sells itself when you use Smart Mirror, because the patient can actually see the polarized effect by moving a little slider on the iPad back and forth.

Our consumers are visual learners, and because they are visual learners, the visual media of Smart Mirror allows them to see what they want to purchase, and how it's going to work for them.

When we first adopted Smart Mirror, we found some of the staff who had been in the industry for a long time wanted to continue doing things

the old fashioned way, the way they were trained. So I literally went into every office and took out all their PD sticks. The only person in the office who could have a PD stick was the office manager, and only because if they needed to measure an outside frame that was being brought to us for some reason.

We eliminated all of the other crutches they were using. It took a little bit of training to get the buy-in from the staff, but once they saw the impact that it had on the patients, everybody bought in. But we had to throw some of them into the deep end first.

The iPad is increasingly familiar to patients, too. They may have one themselves. So to be able to do a product demonstration on a media that they already trust is important. We're in a visual industry, so to be able to share with patients the visual side of our industry through an iPad has a resonating effect on them." ■

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