



News Release

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For Immediate Release

OPTIMA CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF OPTICAL INNOVATION

Industry Leader Marks Its' 20th Anniversary

Stratford, Conn. (February 24, 2004) – Twenty years ago, Optima opened its doors determined to fill a void in the optical industry. Founder Nick Niejelow had a vision to use technology to revolutionize eyewear for the millions of people wearing thick, heavy eyeglasses. While working with frames and CR-39® lenses, he came to realize that plastics held the key to radical improvements in lenses, and so his mission began. In just a few years, in a joint partnership with Asahi the fruits of Optima's R&D efforts were realized with the introduction of the first 1.60 finished lenses. The lenses called HyperIndex® 1.60 set a new standard with their 1.3mm center thickness. But the race for the thinnest lenses was just beginning.

A year later Optima introduced a scratch-resistant coating for its 1.60 lens. This enhancement dramatically improved lens wearability. Soon to follow was the first 1.60 flat top bifocal. In 1990 the company introduced the first factory-applied hydrophobic AR coating to the finished lens and the first finished minus aspheric design on a 1.60. By 1992 the lens that heralded the new dawn of lens technology hit the market, the first of its kind and the new gold standard, Optima's HyperIndex 1.66 with a 1.0 center thickness. The world's thinnest and lightest lenses were born. Even wearers with the strongest prescriptions were freed from heavy thick glasses. The thinner, lighter lenses spurred innovation in the frame industry also. Eyeglass wearers wanted sleek sexy glasses and the industry complied. Consumers were the big winners.

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In a steady, consistent stream Optima has continued to introduce innovation after innovation; in 1995, it introduced the first 1.66 progressive and flat top bifocal, in 1996 a 1.66 backside aspheric and in 2002, RESOLUTION®, the first birefringence-free polycarbonate lens.

Now in its twentieth year Optima is developing an AR coating that promises to change the standard forever. The company has also announced it will be doubling its polycarbonate lens manufacturing capabilities with ground breaking set for a new plant in mid 2004 in Milford, CT. "I have always believed that technology holds the key to improving the quality of life for lens wearers," says Nicholas Niejelow, president and CEO of Optima Inc. "Our most recent breakthrough has resulted in a polycarbonate lens, RESOLUTION®, that exceeds the optics of a 1.60. Innovation in our manufacturing processes has spurred dramatic gains in productivity to the point where our optically superior, thinner and lighter lens is affordable to the masses. We have the product that meets the needs of today's lens wearer. And our new plant will incorporate new innovations and further efficiencies so that we can meet the demand."

Optima's products, the HyperView 1.60 and 1.66 product lines, HyperView 1.66. POLARTEC polarized lenses and its RESOLUTION line of lenses are available nationwide through wholesale laboratories. For more information call Optima at (800) 621-1216.

Optima Timeline

? 1984 Optima is founded

All Industry Firsts

- ✍ 1987 HyperIndex® 1.60 finished lenses and a new industry standard with a 1.3mm CT
- ✍ 1988 scratch resistant coating is added to the HyperIndex® 1.60 finished lens
- ✍ 1989 HyperIndex® 1.60 flat top 28 bifocal
- ✍ 1990 factory applied hydrophobic AR coating to the finished lens and a finished minus aspheric design on a 1.60
- ✍ 1992 HyperIndex® 1.66 and a new industry standard of a finished lens with a 1.0 CT and a double concave 1.66 SV aspheric semi-finished
- ✍ 1993 HyperIndex® 1.66 finished now available with a tintable SR
- ✍ 1995 HyperView® 1.66 progressive
- ✍ 1996 a backside aspheric design for the 1.66 finished
- ✍ 1998 HyperIndex® 1.66 flat top 28 bifocal
- ✍ 2001 Habilis' manufacturing plant ground breaking
- ✍ 2001 production begins for Resolution®
- ✍ 2002 Resolution is released
- ✍ 2003 Polartec® 1.60 aspheric polarized SV

