

## The Future – Disruptive Optometry

Change is the only constant. How our profession embraces, and indeed leads, disruption will be the key to our collective successful future. The pace of disruption, both in our world and in our industry, is accelerating, forcing independent optometrists to examine their practices with a view to meeting changing patient needs and embracing technology, while also ensuring patient safety. This opportunity allows the profession of optometry to get ahead of the curve and lead change, rather than be a victim of it. The Canadian Association of Optometrists invited four leaders in the industry to provide their perspectives on disruptive optometry and how optometrists can be the disruptor, rather than the disrupted.

In recent years, there have been disruptions in several industries, including urban transportation (ride sharing), travel (vacation rentals) and financial services (online banking), that have enjoyed massive success. As a result, there are increasing numbers of entrepreneurs working tirelessly to create a technology and/or concept that will be the next big “game changer” in an established industry. These disruptors usually originate from outside the industry, and for good reason. Being an outsider gives them the objectivity of distance from the limitations of tradition, convention and occasionally legislation, along with the invaluable perspective of the un-biased consumer. These insights allow for disruptors to identify gaps within the conventional models of the industry where customers are not currently being serviced. The gaps become opportunities to solve problems for the consumer in a new and innovative way.

Optometry, like any other profession, has its gaps, where the consumer is not getting exactly what they want but rather is experiencing the status quo. In our view, we need to get ahead of disruptions by regularly ‘disrupting’ ourselves with a mindset of openness and continual self-reflection. The challenge is to ask the right questions, no matter how difficult they might be, because the questions you ask yourself will shape what your practice will become in the future.

At IRIS, we asked ourselves what our patients wanted that was missing in our model of eye care. The answer? An increasing demand for information, transparency, and a more personalized experience. Using this information as a foundation, we pushed ourselves to develop a strategy and tool, using tablet-based technology to enhance the eye exam and eyewear sales experience. The tool and the strategy both serve to differentiate our group in the market and close the gap with consumers.

After implementation of new tools and technology, it is especially important to measure their impact. In our case we use frequent observation, detailed analytic measurement of results, and patient feedback to guide us. The results that you measure can help you to ask more questions and make further improvements. This cycle of self-reflection and adjustment is critical to success and one that is consistently employed by disruptive entrepreneurs who change our world.

With this knowledge, I firmly believe that if we as individual practitioners, groups and a profession develop a habit of continuing to question our own conventions, we may just resist that next big disruption on the horizon.

### **Dr. Daryan Angle**

*Vice President Business Development, IRIS, The Visual Group*

Why are online companies targeting eye care and the optical business? Why does independent optometry feel under attack from disruptive technology, online refraction, virtual online fitting or remote online diagnostics? The reality is that optometry is no more a target for disruption than the rest of the health care system, which has traditionally been slow to adapt to technology and change. The system’s reaction to new technology has often been to dismiss it or seek legislative protection. Slow-moving industries or companies are the low-hanging fruit for technology disruptors. So how can optometry get ahead of disruptors, embrace technology and create sustainable growth in the future?

1. Disruptive technology is good – Many studies have shown that new technology forces businesses to innovate and differentiate. The first disruptors in an industry often have not thought of the long-term, legal or safety implications of their products or services. Disruptors in optometry have forced many offices

to think about how they create a patient experience, demonstrate quality, create an efficient eye exam process, and even what it means to be an eye care professional. The future of optometry should be focused on serving patients better, rather than on government protection from market disruption.

2. Embrace change – Regardless of how secure your business is, you can't prevent disruption. If your reaction to disruption is to create differentiated value with consumers and patients, you will always be able to compete with disruptors. Start by incorporating learning as part of your organizational culture and provide opportunities for your staff and associates to learn and grow. Create processes and a structure that encourage sharing and learning. Any office or organization can develop a learning or disruptive mindset, but it needs a champion. Change begins with fearless leaders demonstrating the rewards and value of change to office staff and patients.
3. Listen to your patients – Patient surveys and research consistently show a demonstrated preference for comprehensive eye care delivered by local optometrists. Some of the most disruptive technologies in eye care have focused on simplifying the eye care process. By making the eye care experience simple, comprehensive and personal, optometrists can effectively maintain their status as “the” primary eye care expert with patients, while opening up opportunities in other specialty areas.

An optometrist eye care expert using the latest technology represents the ultimate disruptor in eye care!

**Grant Larsen**  
CEO Eye Recommend

**D**isruption is not a new word for any industry and companies that have been identified as disruptive are often rewarded for it. Amazon is an obvious example, but we have also seen this in our industry with Clearly and Warby Parker. Disruptors take a “tired” or “old-fashioned” industry and use technology and new delivery models to deliver products and services that align with current and future consumer expectations.

Technology itself can also be a significant disruptor. The best example of this is streaming technology. For example, Blockbuster Entertainment, an American-

## Important Safety Information

### Indications and clinical use:

Xiidra® is indicated for the treatment of the signs and symptoms of dry eye disease.

### Contraindications:

Patients who are hypersensitive to this drug or to any ingredients in the formulation or component of the container should avoid taking Xiidra. For a complete listing, see the Dosage Forms, Composition and Packaging section of the Product Monograph.

### Relevant Warnings and Precautions:

#### **Use in Specific Populations:**

**Pregnancy:** There are no adequate and well-controlled studies of Xiidra use in pregnant women. Xiidra should be used with caution during pregnancy.

**Lactation:** It is not known whether Xiidra is excreted in human milk. Because many drugs are excreted in human milk, caution should be exercised when Xiidra is administered to a nursing woman.

**Pediatric Use:** Safety and efficacy in pediatric patients have not been established.

**Geriatric Use:** No overall differences in safety or effectiveness have been observed between elderly and younger patients.

### Adverse Reactions:

In clinical trials, the most common ocular adverse reactions were eye irritation (18%), eye pain (13%) and instillation site reaction (12%); the most common non-ocular adverse reaction was dysgeusia (14%).

Hypersensitivity adverse reactions, including anaphylactic reaction/anaphylaxis, type IV hypersensitivity with respiratory distress, swollen tongue, and asthma have been reported in postmarketing experiences.

### Dosage and Administration:

Instill one drop of Xiidra twice daily (approximately 12 hours apart) into each eye using a single-use container. Discard the single-use container immediately after using in both eyes. Contact lenses should be removed prior to the administration of Xiidra and may be reinserted 15 minutes following administration.

### For more information:

Consult the complete Product Monograph at <http://www.shirecanada.com/pm/en/Xiidra.pdf> for further information on contraindications, warnings, precautions, adverse reactions, and dosage and administration. The Product Monograph is also available at: **1-800-268-2772**.

**References:** 1. Xiidra® Product Monograph. Shire Pharma Canada ULC, December 2017. 2. Holland EJ, et al. Lifitegrast for the treatment of dry eye disease: results of a phase iii, randomized, double-masked, placebo-controlled trial (OPUS-3). *Ophthalmology* 2017;124:53–60. 3. Tauber J, et al. Lifitegrast ophthalmic solution 5.0% versus placebo for treatment of dry eye disease; results of the randomized phase III OPUS-2 study. *Ophthalmology* 2015;122:2423–2431.

© Xiidra and the Xiidra logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of SARcode Bioscience Inc., a wholly-owned, indirect subsidiary of Shire plc. Shire and the Shire logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Shire Pharmaceutical Holdings Ireland Limited or its affiliates.

© 2018 Shire Pharma Canada ULC. All rights reserved.  
Toronto, Ontario M5H 4E3



**Xiidra is the first and only molecule in its class.†**

Lifitegrast is a lymphocyte function-associated antigen-1 (LFA-1) antagonist.

  
**xiidra**<sup>®</sup>  
Lifitegrast  
ophthalmic solution 5%

# Xiidra improved symptoms of eye dryness in as early as 2 weeks

Clinical trials showed Xiidra<sup>®</sup> improved eye dryness in 12, 6, and as early as 2 weeks vs. vehicle as measured by Eye Dryness Score (EDS).\*

## Indication

Xiidra is indicated for the treatment of the signs and symptoms of Dry Eye Disease.

## Study Design

The efficacy of Xiidra vs. vehicle was evaluated in four randomized, double-masked, 12-week trials, enrolling patients with a history of Dry Eye Disease.



## Demonstrated Statistically Significant Symptom Improvement

**\* In 2 of 4 clinical trials, Xiidra improved eye dryness in 12, 6, and as early as 2 weeks<sup>1</sup>**

In OPUS-3 (Study 4; N = 711), a significant difference in mean change from baseline to Day 84 in EDS favouring Xiidra (-37.7) over vehicle (-30.5) was observed ( $p = 0.0007$ ). Significant improvement in mean change from baseline of EDS was seen in the Xiidra group over vehicle for key secondary endpoints at Day 14 (-22.7 vs. -14.9,  $p < 0.0001$ ) and Day 42 (-33.0 vs. -23.7,  $p < 0.0001$ ).<sup>1,2</sup>

In OPUS-2 (Study 3; N = 718), a statistically significant difference in mean change from baseline to Day 84 in EDS (co-primary symptoms endpoint) favouring Xiidra (-35.30) over vehicle (-22.75) was observed ( $p < 0.0001$ ). A post hoc analysis of mean change from baseline in EDS for secondary endpoints showed a treatment effect as early as Day 14 for Xiidra over vehicle (-19.7 vs. -13.1) and at Day 42 (-28.3 vs. -18.2).<sup>1,3</sup>

In OPUS-2, Xiidra treatment did not result in a statistically significant difference for the co-primary sign endpoint (ICSS).<sup>1,3</sup>

Over 2,400 patients with Dry Eye Disease took part in 5 different clinical trials with Xiidra<sup>1,†</sup>

† Comparative clinical significance has not been established.

based provider of home movie and video game rentals, declined the opportunity to buy Netflix (reportedly for \$60M) because corporate executives doubted the future of streaming video. We all know how that ended. In our industry, we have new telemedicine platforms, online refraction and dispensing, smartphone auto-refraction, kiosk medicine and home delivery eye care which, combined, could have an impact on the way we practice our profession.

In my opinion, one of the biggest disruptors will be the consolidation of independent clinics. The logic for consolidation requires understanding the motivation of those pursuing it. Consolidators possess the financial capacity and scalability to create brands that compete with independent doctors. They can build the technology to disrupt unlike anything available to an independent doctor. This is not a bad thing, but financially motivated consolidation has not been good for optometry in other markets, and it can happen remarkably fast.

What solutions can individual doctors offer to combat all of this potential disruption? We have all heard that the combination of a positive patient relationship and excellent customer service will ensure a thriving independent optometric practice. I agree that the power of the relationship we have with our patients is critical to a successful practice. I would caution however, that consumer expectations are changing. The traditional model of going for an eye exam and choosing glasses is not very convenient for the consumer. Practices that create a brand that means something to the consumer, offer innovative products, enable technology to improve and deliver a great experience will truly thrive and ultimately emerge as the long-term winners in our industry.

Independent doctors will continue to be challenged in their practices, but they can choose to redefine the patient experience. Self-disruption using new technologies in refraction, binocular vision testing, and delegation of services provides opportunities for doctors to differentiate themselves and re-define the traditional experience. How we communicate has also changed, and it is incumbent on us to find a way to communicate with consumers in a manner and with a frequency that is meaningful to them. For example, Beacon technology (targeted marketing using geolocation) represents a brand-new frontier in the retail space and an intriguing way of enabling communication with patients in the mobile environment. We have all seen the future and it IS mobile!

We owe it to ourselves to invest in disruption, rather than become victims of it. We need to think differently and reflect on how we are perceived by the patient. Optometric leaders need to find ways to embrace, support and where possible, provide technological innovation not only to compete with today's disruption, but also the inevitable and ongoing change of tomorrow. Disruption in our industry is real and tangible, and doctors should approach it as both an opportunity and threat, and should act quickly to incorporate or mitigate disruption in their own practices.

**Dr. Alan Ulsifer**  
*Chair & CEO, FYI Doctors*

---

**W**e are living in a fast-paced technological world that is challenging all industries, including optometry. Disruptors confront optometrists daily and will continue to do so. There's a revolution happening outside the exam room. Now, more than ever, the patient is driving change. The use of tablets, computers, smartphones, and ubiquitous net access to information has led patients to adopt new ways of communicating and shopping. Patient choice is evolving and clinics need to adapt accordingly to stay relevant and attractive to their existing and potential patient base.

#### **EMBRACE CHANGE WITH THE RIGHT PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE**

The ability of a clinic and its staff to adapt to change is positively correlated to a practice's success. Practices that favor the status quo will one day be outmatched by counterparts that choose to adjust to the changing optometric landscape.

Technology has revolutionized the way consumers engage with products, services and health professionals. A platform like Twitter has even changed how some heads of state communicate! For the optometric industry, today's empowered patient expects optometrists to understand their needs, their history and their communication preferences. And since patients are now doing practically everything using their smartphones, there is a growing likelihood that, unless your services are realigned to reflect this new reality, some patients will decide to switch optometrists to find the convenience they expect.

The key is to have a product management software (PMS) that drives evolution in your clinic. Your PMS needs to have the ability to make and track communication within the patient file by email or text message to maximize engagement. Because your PMS is the central repository of all your patients' information, it is crucial that all contact with your patient reside in their file, which should be easily accessible to their care team.

Big data helps to improve patient care. Data is knowledge and knowledge is power. The right PMS will allow you to track your own key performance indicators (KPIs) to identify trends and opportunities for improvement within your practice. Another indispensable tool is the ability to easily issue a patient experience survey that allows you to assess your patients' satisfaction over time. In this way, clinic data analysis becomes a comprehensive examination of the health of your practice. You don't know what you'll find until you have the right tools and expertise to look!

Practice management systems such as Optosys (OSI's proprietary software) incorporate some specific technologies that align with the new optometric landscape, including:

- **Online appointment booking module:** Not all patients have time during your business hours to phone in, wait on hold, and negotiate with a live person to book an exam at your convenience. Patients want the flexibility to book appointments online, choose the optometrist they wish to see and select the time slots that work best for them. With 24/7 access to scheduling, exam booking becomes easier and more attractive for many patients browsing online or working shifts who you otherwise would struggle to reach.
- **Automated Recalling:** What once took up an enormous amount of staff time, with varying degrees of success, can now be fully automated by the Optosys communication module. By connecting with their platform of choice (text or email), Optosys will inform your patients that it's time to book an eye exam or remind them that their exam is coming up, thus minimizing "lates" and "no shows".
- **Direct-to-Lab eOrders:** To improve staff efficiency, electronic lab orders can be sent directly from the patient file to the lab. This reduces transcription errors that can negatively impact delivery times and a patient's level of satisfaction with your services.
- **eCommerce functionalities:** An eBoutique can be created to display inventory online. We know that today's consumers want to view things online before going to a store. This module allows you to tap into that consumer demographic and reach new consumers who would not otherwise visit your practice.

### OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE

For years, you have been urged to have the latest and most advanced equipment in your pre-test and exam room. Optometrists now have the opportunity to do the same for all aspects of their clinic's operations. Independent practices can remain highly competitive for years to come if they embrace all technologies that can help them improve patient care and clinic performance.

#### **Patrice Lacoste**

*CEO, Optometric Services Inc. (OSI)*