

# 5 Questions for...

**EB** catches up with David Rips, president and CEO of Younger Optics.

Here's what he has to say about his company's newest technology and on how the industry can continue moving forward.

## 1. What is your new technology?

DriveWear's patented technology represents a new category of lenses. It's the first "intelligent" combination of NuPolar polarization and Transitions photochromics to accomplish a specific goal: To create the perfect lens for those spending time driving an automobile.

## 2. How will it help the market?

There's an easily explainable, specifically targeted market niche where the second pair can really make a difference in performance.

Nearly everyone is a driver, and this is a lens that ECPs can feel good about offering patients.

## 3. What are the keys for ECPs to select technology?

It's important for ECPs to be able to realistically separate true technology advances from marketing attempts to differentiate lenses.

ECPs should be asking themselves questions like: "Just because this is newer, is it really better?"



and "Does the lens really do something special?"

## 4. What's the future for lenses?

I've been in the industry my entire life and have never seen a time when things were more competitive and threatened. But, at the same time, the industry has provided more opportunities. Younger will continue to offer an alternative model, one based on partnership with its customers.

Demographics are great for the industry, and the world is expanding with people who need and can afford eyewear.

## 5. What about optical?

At its core, the industry provides something wonderful to the world: It helps the world to see. The inven-

tion of eyewear is truly one of the most important events in the history of mankind, since it allows people to have longer productive lives and to enjoy their lives more fully.

I view the biggest challenges as coming from within the optical industry itself. It almost seems as if we have an inferiority complex about our products. Quite often, an ECP is afraid to provide and explain additional products and service and doesn't understand how valuable these are to patients.

The path beyond these challenges lies with innovation and education. Truly, as an industry, I believe the best is still ahead of us.

## The Personal Touch...

**EB:** What's your favorite vacation destination?

**DR:** Home. I tend to travel a lot on business, and luckily sometimes my family comes with me. So when I have free time with my family, we like to spend it at home. If not there, any casino with high stakes poker!

**EB:** What is your family pet's name?

**DR:** We have a miniature Australian Shepherd named Shelby.

**EB:** What's your favorite color?

**DR:** I like green...it seems to stand for living and growing things. Actually in terms of vision, green was probably the most important color for humans to be able to distinguish.

**EB:** What is on your desk right now?

**DR:** My records and workplace is nearly entirely electronic. For years I've received all my information through the computer, and even if I do get hard copies of things such as regular mail, I tend to quickly scan it in using high-speed scanners and read it that way. It makes for a good way to work; the world can be your office.

**EB:** Who is your hero?

**DR:** My business hero is Warren Buffett. The integrity, honesty, and successful way he runs his businesses, to me, is the standard.