Visionary Thinking

CC SYSTEMS LAB MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Lab management and e-commerce software solutions for the optical eyewear industry – servicing over 170 wholesale surfacing, finishing/glazing and coating labs, integrated retailers with labs, and optical wholesalers in US, Canada, Caribbean, Africa, Europe and the U.K.

- Owned and operated by optical professionals, in business for over 23 years
- Over 300 years of in-house optical experience
- All products are easy to learn and extremely configurable
- On-site installations, data entry, staff training, data conversions, custom programming, hardware, network set ups, and customer support
- Download or customized reporting via Microsoft™ Access, Excel or any report writer
- Complete lab management solution ensures dramatic return on investment

PRODUCTS

Labzilla

- Lens fabrication, Rx calculation and comprehensive machine interfaces
- Automatic pricing and invoicing—no double entry required
- Create multiple grids with flexible pricing and discount options
- Complete Rx lens, stock lenses and contact lens databases—updated semi-monthly
- Updates including base curves automatically downloaded straight to lab's server
- "FRAMES data" tracing and drill points database
- Lens specifications from 120 manufacturers—500,000 SKU's
- Progressive\aspheric lenses mapped for optimum Rx accuracy and minimum lens thickness
- User defined work tickets, Rx invoices and monthly statements
- 3rd party pricing including Vision Web, EyeFinity, VSP, private plans & electronic claims
- Free Form Processing lens design system and hardware integration

J-I-T Just-In-Time Inventory Control Software

- Bar coding, purchasing, electronic ordering, receiving and physical inventory counts
- Scan and Verify-Perfect Lens and Frame Selection and Ordering Software

OpticalOnline E-Commerce

- Internet based remote ordering, tracing, and job checking
- Leading e-commerce technology
- Over 1,000,000 remote orders processed

We have the solution ready made for you at cost effective prices. We continually add new features.
We have the resources and optical lab management knowledge to custom build your dreams.
Talk with real optical people with real lab management experience and solutions. Call us today.

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LABZILLA FEATURES

Included with Labzilla installations:

- Labzilla Lab Management Software
- Hardware Set Ups and Networking
- Three Day Classroom Training
- Onsite Installation and Training
- Lens Fabrication and Machine Interfaces
- Rx Invoicing and Pricing
- Rx, Stock and Contact Lens Databases
- Management Reports
- Traces, Orders and Calcs
- Third Party Pricing (Insurance, Safety, Industrial)
- Frame Database
- Accounts Receivable
- Tray Tracking
- Detailed Production Job Flow
- Breakage Monitoring
- Just-In-Time Inventory and Bar coding
- Scan and Verify

Optional Extras

- Customized Programming
- Customized Microsoft Access Reports
- Lab to Lab Remote Transfers
- Remote Tracing and Ordering
- Internet "Live" Job Checking
- Electronic Vendor Reports
- Electronic Messaging
- Electronic Reports By Email
- Automated End of Day WIP Reports
- Integrated "Eyefinity" Processing
- Integrated "Vision Web" Processing
- Compulink, IFILE/CFILE and OfficeMate Enterprise integration—Jan. 2007

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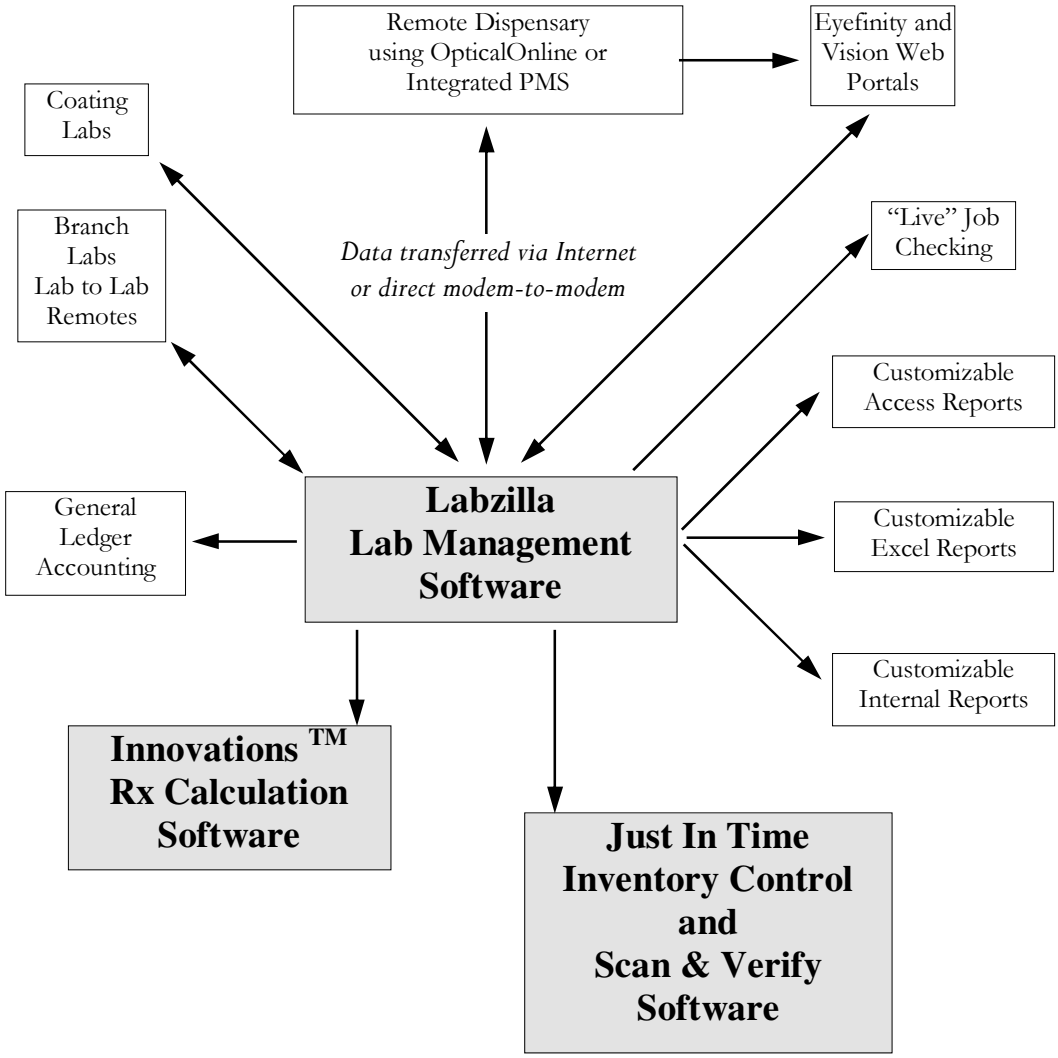
LABZILLA LAB MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE



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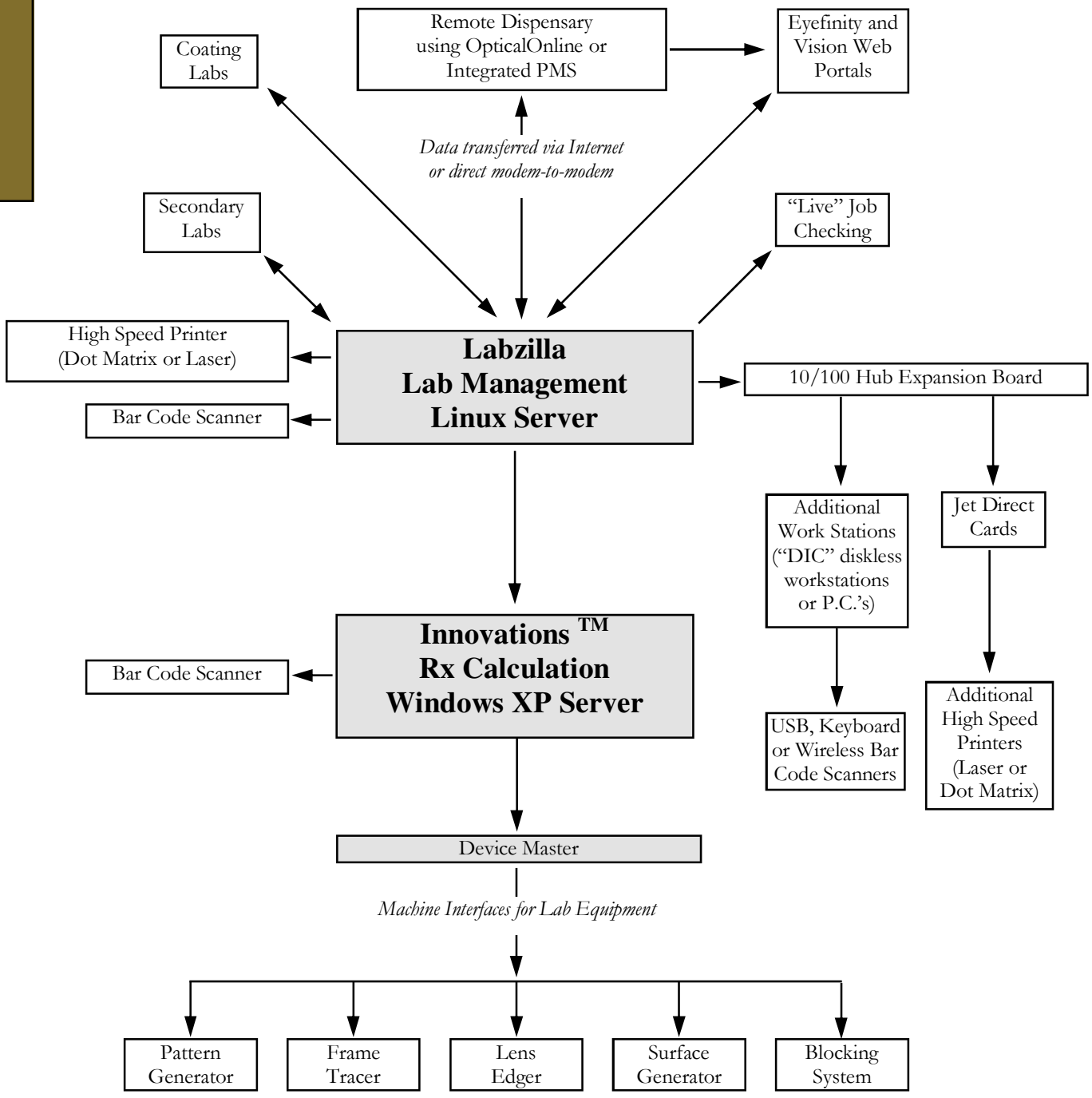
HARDWARE SET UP AND NETWORKING



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THREE DAY CLASSROOM TRAINING

Every Labzilla installation includes three days of classroom training at either our US, Canadian and Irish offices. There is no charge for this training.

- We deliberately take you away from your lab environment to ensure your undivided attention
- Customers meet and create a rapport with our staff
- Training includes how to complete basic order entry, how to data enter and customize lens specification, edged and uncut price lists, discounts, customers, third party pricing and much more
- By the end of your training, you will understand the basic functions of Labzilla and are given a "to do" list to complete the system set up when you return to your offices
- Intensive follow up occurs after your training to answer additional questions, guide you through the most efficient methods to complete your system set up and most importantly to ensure thorough testing before you go "live"

ONSITE INSTALLATION AND TRAINING

Our twenty years experience is extremely valuable in guiding you through the installation process. Your onsite installation will be arranged to ensure the minimum amount of downtime and parallel processing.

- Before onsite installation occurs, we help you ensure all data entry is complete and tested
- Onsite installation normally occurs over a weekend
- Saturday—your lab equipment is connected to new system and tested
- Sunday—your staff are trained to process orders and enter your work-in-progress
- Monday—you go "live" with your new system. Our staff are onsite to assist with any questions
- Our technicians can assist with networking your hardware, cabling, printer and bar coding set ups, software interfaces, and Internet connections and firewalls
- Each installation is customized to meet your needs

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LENS FABRICATION AND MACHINE INTERFACES

The system is designed to make Rx Processing as automated as possible.

- An extensive range of settings can accommodate any lab equipment and requirement.
    - Compensated and uncompensated tools
    - Tools index and tools rounding
    - Different types of surface blocking
    - Free form and cut of polish, CNC and manual generators
    - Three different ways of grinding thinning prism
- Thickness parameters can be define by material, by lens type and even by the color of the lens
- Each material can be set to specific tool index and prism index or different power compensations
- Lenses can be individually set for specific layout, thickness charts, block charts, prism chart and cribbing chart
- Required minimum edge can be set for different frame types - Metal, Drilled, Grooved, and Safety
- For manual generator - settings to reduce elliptical error
- The most extensive machine interface program, including all manufacturers capable of interface — E.G. Gerber Coburn, National Optronics, Nidek, Weco, LOH, Optek, Berkshire CNC OptiDrill, Briot, Topcon, Essilor, Schneider, AIT, Indo, Optotek and all OMA compliant equipment
- Free Form Processing integration:
    - LDS (lens design system)—Seiko Epson, Shamir Prescriptor and Indo Free-Form Solutions
    - Free Form generators—LOH, Schneider and Optotek
- In Job Entry Screen, Field Validation Table prevent from entering "bad" data
- Shift F1 Key provides on screen assistance for every field in Job Entry Screens
- For each field with multiple choices - F1 lookup key available
- Operator training time reduced to an absolute minimum

RX INVOICING AND PRICING

Automatically prices and invoices every order at the point of data entry—no double keying

- Unique “grid” pricing greatly reduces clerical time to create and maintain price lists
- Generates Rx invoices for all Rx orders, printed at order entry or at shipping
- Eliminates filing of hard copies, thereby preventing lost or misfiled paperwork
- Eliminate the need to match up control and production documentation before shipping
- All prescriptions priced automatically and correctly—reduces clerical time and costly billing mistakes
- Allows for self maintenance of 999 Rx Price lists
- Custom create packages for frame and lens or add-on combinations
- Allows reprinting or recalculation of any Rx delivered or in progress, including digitized frame trace
- Shipping manifest for all types of couriers automatically produced on demand
- Generate packing slips
- Credit card processing—accepts credit card transactions as a form of payment at order entry
- Discount specific items for an individual account within any price list
- Suppress the dollar amounts on the printed invoices when applicable
- Credits—track by customer and order #, eliminating confusion on redos

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RX AND STOCK LENS DATABASE

Contains specifications for all semi-finished and finished blanks for over 120 major lens manufacturers around the world

- Currently over 500,000 unique SKU's available in our databases, including over 635 different lens types, over 45 different lens materials and nearly 3,700 possible lens combinations.
- Communicates the following information to the Rx Processor:

Seg drop	Seg inset	Blank edge thickness
Usable Blank	Marked front curve	Blank center thickness
Front sag value	Seg size	Minimum Edge Thickness
True front curve	Vendor	Minimum Center Thickness

- Automatically tailor calculations for center, edge or BOC placement for all lenses
- Automatic data updates from our web site @ www.opticalonline.com—updated every two weeks
- Create your own lenses in our user defined databases

CONTACT LENS DATABASE

Contains inventory specifications for all 5 major lens manufacturers including B&L, OSI (Ocular Science), Vistakon (J&J) Ciba Vision and Cooper Vision

- Currently over 500,000 lenses available in our databases
- Includes UPC, Vendor, Style, Foci, Toric Axis, Size, Base Curve, Color, and Add power

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MANAGEMENT REPORTS

Any report within Labzilla can be printed, displayed to the screen or emailed.

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

- View Customer Accounts
- Cash History—Bank Deposit and Summary
- Aging Report—Totals Only, Summary or Detail
- Report on New Accounts
- Commissions Due
- A/R Distribution to G/L or Export GL Distribution
- Tax Report
- Commission Sub-System
  - Define Commissions—Customer / Groups
  - Define Commissions by Salesman
  - Salesman Commission Report
- Statements—Use Defined on any paper size/format—8.5x11", 8.5x14, A4, A5

SALES ANALYSIS

- Display Customer Sales Statistics
- Customer Reports
  - Sales Action Report—*See Example*
  - Sales Summary by Customer—*See Example*
  - Detailed Sales by Customer
    - Detailed Sales By Customer—*See Example*
    - Sales by cust. With lenses and frames
  - Sales by Customer/Patient
  - Sales by Salesman/Customer for One Vendor
  - Twelve Months Report—*See Example*
  - Invoices by Customer
- User Defined Reports—customized groups, details, totals, sub-totals
- Usage Reports
  - Product Usage Report—*See Example*
  - Lens Usage Report
  - Lenses by Material / Type—*See Example*
  - Lenses by Mat/Type—Range of Sphere/Cyl.
  - Miscellaneous Items
    - Misc. Item Usage
    - Misc. Item Analysis
  - Package Sales Analysis Report
- Listing of "Frame Supplied" invoices, Frame Usage by Customer or Frame to Follow
- Group Reports
  - Lenses by mat/type, progs by vend, Trans

Continued...

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MANAGEMENT REPORTS…… continued

ORDER ENTRY

- Guaranteed Delivery
  - Unjustified Missed Deadlines
  - WIP by work station
  - Turnaround Time
  - Sales Promotion Job Report
  - Customer Report
- Print Promised Jobs
- Frame Supplied Order Report

PRODUCTION REPORTS

- Work In Progress
  - Overdue Jobs
  - Jobs at the same Work Station
  - Work In Progress by Frame Category
  - WIP by Salesman
- Daily Activity
  - Display Daily Activity
  - Incoming Sales Report—*See Example*
  - Incoming Sales Report by Location
- Delivery Report—Average Time in Lab
- Job Flow Monitor
- Breakages
  - Breakage Monitor
  - Display Breakages
  - Breakage Report—*See Example*
  - Breakage Analysis Report—*See Example*
  - Breakage In Progress by Customer
  - Breakage Report by Customer
  - Overdue Jobs
- Redos
- Deleted Orders
- Credit and Discount Justification
  - Display or Print Credits
  - Display or Print Credit Listing
- Data Entry Statistics
- Guaranteed Delivery
- Vendor Reports—*See Example*

Visionary Thinking

TRACES, ORDERS AND CALCS

"Save them forever"

Storage of pertinent information of all orders processed for an unlimited period of time

- Dramatically reduces hard copy file space and eliminates time lost due to misplaced documentation - limited only by the size of your hard drive
- Instant retrieval and reprint of any order—search either by ECP or patient
- FRAMES data" - complete digitized frame library including frame tracings and drill points, allowing for superior size and thickness calculations, eliminating "frame to follow" time lag
- Automatic archiving—no time wasted on purges or back up

THIRD PARTY PRICING
(Insurance, Safety and Industrial)

Automatically produce multiple transactions (invoices) for a single order by splitting the charges between the provider, the paying agent and the patient. Also included are EDI transfers to the Third Party payer.

- Up to 999 on line pricing schedules
- End-to-end VSP processing
- Create and transmit claims in HIPPA approved X-12/837 format
- Receive HIPPA X-12/837 payment for automatic cash application processing
- Configure co-pays and allowances by the individual paying agent
- Create user definable fields capturing data such as Date of Birth, Date Of Service, Provider Panel Numbers, Medicaid/Medicare Numbers, Authorization codes, etc.
- Translate standard optical items into their actual corresponding CPT/VCodes
- Eligibility checks including validating any third party including Medicare/ Medicaid numbers
- Transmit EOM (end of month) statements electronically expediting processing time

FRAME DATABASE

Stores specifications for box measurements and complete digitized shape of an unlimited number of frames

- Stores pattern location seg size and lens circumference
- Allows for billing of frames to customers by barcode or SKU number, noting discounts and up charges for special orders
- Complete "FRAMES data" Publication Electronic Database available including frame tracings and drill points
- Ability to price frames by vendor or model groups

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ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

Automatic processing, posting and creation of monthly statements eliminating the need for additional clerical staff

- Optional bar coding of each job makes posting fully automatic and error free
- Communicates lens and frame information automatically to databases for inventory and accounting record update
- Credit limits, Do Not Ship and COD options setup with a single keystroke
- Month end aged trial balance and management reports allow for complete accounting data including monthly profit and loss statements (linked to General Ledger system)
- Posting is instantaneous—no long waits for updating routines

TRAY TRACKING

Allows immediate access to all orders for any customer from any screen without having to exit current screen

- Promised Jobs Report
- Provides the following information:

Order/Invoice Number	Comments if delayed	Date Received
Date delivered	Status Code for Job Tracking	Patient Name
Electronic Messaging	Complete Rx and Frame Data	Tray Number

- Provides a print-out by customer and/or barcode station on all overdue jobs by date
- Unlimited tray tracking stations
- Report for any job flagged as "HOT" on demand
- Detailed audit trail of all stations that each job has passed through in the lab
- Automatic updating of each tray at all devices including generator, blocker, edger and inventory control
- Stops delivery of jobs to be coated, tinted or drilled (user defined) without confirmation of the function being completed
- Detailed analysis of any Rx through complete production cycle, including time stamps between each operation
- Custom create forms for outsourced orders including AR coating—forms user defined

DETAILED PRODUCTION JOB FLOW AND BREAKAGE MONITORING

Unique and valuable feature is the monitor for both job flow and breakage

- Lab manager can fine tune manpower and equipment resources based on the data collected and displayed by the job flow monitor as orders are processed
- If a trend develops regarding spoilage, specific equipment can be easily identified and appropriate action taken

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JUST-IN-TIME INVENTORY CONTROL

Sophisticated inventory control system for semi-finished and finished lenses, frames and misc. items - custom built specifically for the optical industry

- Just-In-Time inventory control
  - The system computes inventory levels based on your average usage, eliminating manual entry of minimum and maximum inventory levels
  - Eliminate all unnecessary stock
- Calculations based on quantities on hand, on order, lead time, annual turnovers required and moving average usage from a 12 week period
- Ultimate lens databases—All major lens companies' lenses and their barcodes on file
- Compatibility with all major barcode scanners on the market to date
- Ordering—purchase order creation, printing and electronic transfers
  - Automatic purchase orders with the capability to fax or modem orders to your suppliers
  - Electronic orders sent via Opticom (www.opticom.com) or directly to each supplier
  - FTP orders directly to all integrated suppliers
  - Manual orders
  - Daily orders—based on one-for-one replenishments
  - Short orders—actual orders missing suitable substitutes
  - Minimum quantity levels—specific to groups of lenses
  - J-I-T—Just-In-Time based on calculated requirements
- Receiving and returns
  - Received orders — p.o. is accessed and items not received are logged as backordered
- Physical counts—audits, variances and cycle counts
- Costing—standard or average cost
- Reporting—sales, usage, optimum levels, slow movers, average usage over time
  - Usage Reports by period, item or vendor
  - Dump obsolete stock and identify fast movers allowing you to replenish quickly
  - Inventory valuation report, optimum on hand or slow movers

SCAN AND VERIFY

Perfect lens selection every time. Bar coded lenses and frame are scanned and verified after lens and frame picking to ensure maximum accuracy

- Eliminate costly picking errors, saving hundred's of dollars per day in lost time and materials
- Warns and stops lens and frame pickers from selecting incorrect lenses and frames
- Automatic prompts on lenses with possible alternate characteristics
- Always have the proper lenses and frame in the correct tray
- Substitute and recalculate Rx's instantly at point of scanning—no need to recall the order
- Create purchase orders for "shorts" on the fly
- Stock substitution
  - Create suitable substitute lenses—E.G. alternate vendors, coated rather than uncoated
  - Automatic recalculation and reprinting work tickets where required
  - Predefine which lenses can be substituted for alternate vendors or higher priced items
  - Predefine which lenses can be substituted for alternate vendors or higher priced items

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Visionary Thinking

CUSTOMIZED PROGRAMMING

Labzilla is the ultimate creation of 23 years of programming based on constant feedback from our customers. We are not finished yet. We doubt we will ever be finished. Our attitude at CC Systems is to create simple, flexible, accurate and customized software to meet your requirements.

We have the programming resources and in-house optical lab management knowledge to guide you to your dream system.

CUSTOMIZED REPORTS

Reports are very personal. Everyone is looking for different information. Despite the multitude of reports already available in Labzilla, use the flexibility of Microsoft Access, Excel, Crystal Reports or any other standard report writer to custom create any report you can imagine.

- Either custom create your own in-house, hire a local student or request a quote from CC Systems to custom build the reports—precisely to your specifications
- Most files within Labzilla are accessible via a download on your network
- Any combination of databases can be merged, separated, compared, totaled, and averaged
- Typical examples already created are Tray Tracking Report By The Hour, Breakage By Department Analysis or Progressive Lens Usage By Company—see attached example reports

LAB TO LAB REMOTE TRANSFERS

More and more labs are cooperating and sharing business

- Smaller labs are transferring specialty orders to larger labs
- Lab to lab remotes automatically transfer orders between Labzilla labs based on flexible predefined criteria

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REMOTE TRACING AND ORDERING

The ultimate business to business ecommerce software for the Internet — specializing in prescription lens data entry and digitized frame tracings — unique on screen data editing for accuracy and efficiency

- Download and test a free copy today—www.optical-online.com/retail_optical.shtml
  - Trace'N' Go—Transmit a frame trace and Rx order
  - Web Order—Transmit Rx Information without a trace for uncut orders

- Allows for complete data entry via the Internet of lenses, digitized frame trace and frame orders by a dispenser — orders are directly transferred into a lab's computer, eliminating any data entry required by the lab
  - No waiting or delays — Orders are directly downloaded from a secured Internet site into the lab's software
  - On-screen editing ensures orders are sent once — accurately and 100% complete
  - Enter edged or uncut lens orders, lens add-ons and frame requirements
  - Attach any OMA compatible frame tracer to the dispenser's computer and include an exact digitized three dimensional frame trace with the order — proven to be as accurate as tracing within your own lab
  - Each lab can customize the data available to each of their retailers — e.g. lenses combinations and descriptions
  - Each user has a unique a account number and password tied to a specified lab or wholesaler

- Advantages and Benefits:
  - Software is simple to install, fast and easy to use
  - All data is verified for accuracy and 100% completeness with on-screen editing
  - Process orders within minutes of being entered by the dispenser
  - Minimum turnaround time guaranteed—no need to wait for frame
  - No more lost sales due to Patient Own Frame or Rush orders
  - Perfect decentration on uncut orders — minimize lens thickness and blank size
  - Eliminate telephone calls and faxes to the lab — order status updated by lab's software
  - All data is saved for redo's, resubmissions and reorders
  - Use an existing Windows computer and share existing fax line for Internet access

- For ECP's using practice management software, the "Send Trace Only" option eliminates double data entry by the ECP by faxing the order and electronically transmitting the frame trace

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INTERNET JOB CHECKING

Job Checking is "live" data, fed directly from your lab's server via a secure connection to an Internet web browser on the ECP's computer

- Job Checking requires no software or set up on the ECP's computer
- Use any kind of Internet access, including dial-up, the ECP can access Job Checking
- Try a "live" demonstration:
  - Go to http://www.opticalonline.com. You can press "Ctrl D" to bookmark this page.
  - Left click on the Job Checking button (located on the right hand side the screen). If required, enter Yes to proceed at the Security Alert warning for security certificates.
  - Enter the appropriate Username and Password as assigned by your lab and click Enter to continue. Each retailer will be assigned by you with their own unique Username and Password.
  - As a demonstration, use Username = 15 and Password = 15
  - Click on Job Status to review orders for the past "x" days - the number of days is defined for each customer by the lab
  - The lab invoice #, date ordered (i.e. date entered into your lab's computer), patient name, P.O. # or reference information, lab tray #, type (edged/uncut) and last status are displayed. Your lab can add a customized promotional message at the top of the screen.
  - The Lab Invoice, Date Ordered, Patient and P.O. columns may be resorted by clicking on the appropriate column heading. Job checking initially sorts the orders by lab invoice #, with shipped orders displayed after work-in-progress orders.
  - The last status description is determined by the last workstation that the lab tray was scanned, complete with the day and time. Any inappropriate tray station descriptions such as "Scan & Verify" can either be hidden from the customer or given an alternate description.
  - Click on the appropriate Lab Invoice # to review the details of each order. All information displayed is identical to the invoice details for each order, including pricing details.
  - Recoup the cost of offering Job Checking as a free service to your lab accounts, by selling advertising space to your suppliers

- Labs that are already using Job Checking are effectively eliminating 80% of all telephone calls from their customers, teaching their customers to use the Internet, driving Internet traffic to their own web sites and paving the way for all orders to be electronically sent via the Internet.

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ELECTRONIC VENDOR REPORTS BY EMAIL

Labzilla can automatically email vendor reports. Lens suppliers such as Transition, Varilux, Hoya, Sola, Shamir, VisionEase and Zeiss require monthly reporting in order to maintain status as a supplier, receive rebates and earn co-op dollars. The reports are simple to set up and take only minutes to run.

- Customize each report with specific lens combinations, add-on misc. items and sales data to include or exclude
- Automatic monthly reports emailed to Transition, Varilux and Zeiss
- Custom create reports to other vendors
- Eliminate hours of administration manually creating reports
- Maintain status as an authorized lens supplier
- Receive rebates based on volume sold
- Receive co-op dollars to distribute to your accounts
- Eliminate paper reports

ELECTRONIC MESSAGING

Labs already using this service have described it as the most important time saving customer service tool and therefore cost cutting improvement to Labzilla. There are HUGE advantages to labs of all sizes - small, medium and large. Email to Fax eliminates the need to make telephone calls to your customers. No more time wasted with busy telephone lines, redials, or time lost waiting to be connected.

No more outgoing long distance calls!

- Electronic messages are simple, very fast, cheap, and provide documented proof that your customers have been notified
- Communication is the answer to many of your existing customer service issues
- Each individual customer can be configured within Labzilla to receive electronic messages by fax or by email or both!
- Each lab can easily create standard messages, accessed by a drop down menu, to transmit with Email to Fax messages, eliminating keystrokes
- Transmit generic electronic messages to individual or group of customers - E.G. New hours, seasonal greetings, lens or package promotions etc.
- Labzilla can transmit electronic messages on "the fly" while checking a job status, a stock order,
- Transmit electronic messages on "the fly" while inputting spoilage data, notifying the customer of any delays
- Labzilla can transmit electronic messages automatically acknowledging the receipt of every order received via OpticalOnline remote ordering
- Labzilla can transmit electronic messages automatically acknowledging the receipt of every order received via Eyefinity
- Ability to email jobs with Frame To Come status

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Visionary Thinking

ELECTRONIC REPORTS BY EMAIL

Generate any report within Labzilla and choose to email it instead of printing.

- Eliminate printing and mailing reports
- Communicate quickly with head office or accountants

AUTOMATED END OF DAY WIP REPORTS

Improve communications and eliminate unnecessary headaches by automatically transmitting End of Day WIP reports to your customers by fax or by email. End of Day WIP Reports are primarily used for accounts without Internet access and who prefer to receive information by fax. Customers with Internet access can access "live" WIP data throughout the day via CC Systems Remote Job Checking service.

- End of day WIP Reports run automatically every night - no human intervention required
- Reports include last tray station that the tray was scanned and whether the order is shipped
- Configure each account to receive either a fax or an email
- Reduce Job Checking telephone calls
- Automate "Frame to Follow" reminders to include lab's tray # with frame

INTEGRATED "*EYEFINITY*" PROCESSING

CC Systems is proud to have been chosen by Eyefinity, the optical industry's most widely used Internet portal, to be the first lab software system to integrate VSP and private lab orders from EyeFinity' s portal directly into its system, including all pricing and invoicing for any VSP plan. The integration is seamless, eliminating the need to audit order entry before processing.

- Eyefinity serves over 18,000 private eyecare practices and 320 optical laboratories, and processes more than 25 million transactions per year.
- "Eyefinity is committed to developing new technology aimed at streamlining processes between the private practice and optical laboratories," says Dave Delle Donne, Eyefinity's vice president of sales and marketing. "This joint development with CC Systems demonstrates both organizations' desire to bring valued solutions to private practice."
- The benefits are many including data entry time and cost savings, enhanced customer service and a unique marketing advantage. The method of processing orders is identical to OpticalOnline remote ordering. Just assign a tray number and the order is complete.
- Configure your system to automatically invoice VSP for certain benefit plans or take advantage of "Private" plans, whereby retailers use the VSP pricing but are responsible for the invoice themselves.
- As orders are shipped, Eyefinity orders are automatically updated on the Eyefinity web site. No intervention required.

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INTEGRATED "*VISION WEB*" PROCESSING

VisionWeb, the premier technology services provider to the optical industry, and CC Systems, offer electronic integration between VisionWeb and CC Systems Labzilla lab management software. With this integration, labs running CC Systems lab management software receive electronic orders directly into their production process through VisionWeb' s online portal. These orders, automatically checked for accuracy and completeness, are electronically received and placed into processing by the lab's CC Systems software, virtually eliminating delays associated with traditional ordering methods. Customers are able to track the status of their orders online, 24/7.

- VisionWeb was originally conceived in early 1999 by Essilor of America, Inc., as a way to harness the power of the Internet to create improvements and efficiencies for its customers. Realizing the value of a collaborative effort, Johnson & Johnson Vision Care, Inc., joined Essilor several months later. The two industry leaders founded VisionWeb, an independent company, to bring the speed, efficiency, and connectivity of the Internet to all participants in the eyecare industry - enhancing their productivity and profitability with a single resource to serve their informational, educational, and commerce needs. Advanced Medical Optics, Inc. (formerly Allergan), Jobson Publishing, Inc., Marchon Eyewear, Inc. , the American Optometric Association, and Transitions Optical, Inc. have since also become equity partners and affiliates of VisionWeb.
- "We are very happy to be able to provide VisionWeb users with access to additional labs to make the ordering of their products more convenient," said Mike O'Malley, Vice President of Business Development for VisionWeb. "Our ability to partner with labs running CC Systems Labzilla software brings us closer to our goal of seamlessly connecting the eyecare marketplace and serve both the eyecare practice and the optical laboratory."
- The benefits are many including data entry time and cost savings, enhanced customer service and a unique marketing advantage. The method of processing orders is identical to OpticalOnline remote ordering. Just assign a tray number and the order is complete.
- VisionWeb has up to date lens listings which can be modified to suit the individual labs needs. The data entry is structured in a similar manner to OpticalOnline plus the ability to get generic shapes from retailers sent with uncut orders.

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Visionary Thinking

FREE FORM SOFTWARE TECHNOLOGY

Don't be surprised to hear the phrase "free-form technology" more and more when discussing Progressive lenses and Aspheric lens processing. Instead of traditional base curve-dependent surfacing techniques and molding methods of manufacturing, free-form lens design and manufacturers use high-speed diamond cutting machines to craft the lens surfaces three dimensionally. The cutting machines can be programmed with the unique optical and physiological characteristics of the wearer. The Progressive lens starts with a spherical front surface single vision blank, and the free-form digital generator custom sculptures the lens on the back. Since several steps of the "surfacing" process are eliminated, there is minimal chance for surfacing errors.

Challenges—It is important to understand the challenges that lie ahead. Without a seamless lab management software system, each order can require data entry into your existing lab management software system and secondly into the software provided by the lens designers. Since all software provided by the lens designers is new and are solely designed to their specifications, the scope of their software can be limited. Many systems cannot import a frame tracing or provide an internal lens databases. If you intend to cost justify your new Free Form generator by processing regular orders and cut-to-polish as well as Free Form orders, it may be necessary to reboot your generator each time you switch order types.

Solution—A seamless CC Systems Lab Management Software System will eliminate all of the above headaches into a one-time data entry process via their Labzilla software. Labzilla determines which orders are regular, cut-to-polish or Free Form. Labzilla automatically prices and invoices each order, with seamless options for tray tracking, management reporting, inventory control, remote ordering with updated lens databases. Labzilla automatically populates the software provided by the equipment supplier and the lens designer. Generators do not be required to be rebooted.

CC Systems were the first Lab Management Software supplier in North America to seamlessly interface SatisLOH's equipment with Seiko lenses. CC Systems is actively working on creating seamless interfaces between all the Free Form equipment suppliers (Schneider, Optotech, SatisLOH, Gerber Coburn and DAC) and all Free Form lens suppliers (Seiko, Indo, Crossbows, Shamir IOT, Optixx and private label). Most of these interface combinations are already completed, tested and in production.

FREE FORM CUSTOMER REFERENCES

Across U.S.

Acoma Optical	Sante Fe, NM	Brian Boddy	505.471.2020	**SatisLOH / LDCA**
Seiko	Hopkins, MN	Kathy Denaro	800.235.5367	**SatisLOH / Seiko**
U.S.Optical	Syracuse, NY	Ron Cotran	315.214.4324	**SatisLOH / Seiko and Shamir**

Across Canada

Plastic Plus	Toronto, Ontario	Paul Faibish	416.789.4307	**SatisLOH / Seiko**
C & C	Toronto, Ontario	Tony Civello	905.574.5552	**Gerber / LDCA**
Prairie	Saskatoon, Sask.	Linda Zoerb	306.934.2977	**Schneider/ Crossbows**
CoOptics	Quebec City, QC	Thierry Levy	514.918.5339	**Gerber / LDCA**

Across U.K.

Berkshire	Thatcham, Berks	Wayne/Dennis	01635-865050	**Gerber / LDCA**

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Visionary Thinking

CUSTOMER REFERENCES

Decisions, decisions, decisions

What hardware to buy?
Why do you need a service contract?
How important is on-going service?
Is the software easy to learn?
What about price comparisons?
Which network to use?
Which lab management is best?
How is the on-site training?
Are software upgrades necessary?
Do you need computer experience?

Talk to existing C.C.Systems Labzilla Users

Across U.S.

MJ Optical	Omaha, Nebraska	Parke Wilkinson	402.339.4029
MH Optical	S. Hackensack, N.J.	Mike Martin	201.489.1110
Reliable Optics	Brooklyn, New York	Howard Fried	917.913.5731
NEA Optical	Jonesboro, Arkansas	Jim Evans	870.935.2179
Galaxy Optical	Brooklyn, New York	Ezra Cohen	718.743.3400

Across Canada

Plastic Plus	Toronto, Ontario	Paul Faibish	416.789.4307
Cenoco/Central	Winnipeg, Manitoba	Rob Soloway	204.949.1437
Tech-Cite	Calgary, Alberta	Bob Way	403.230.4688

Across U.K.

Lumley Optical	Newcastle	Paul Hadwin	01912.651600
M.B.O.S.	Liverpool	Tim Bishop	01517.076844

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Visionary Thinking

in the lab :July 2005 LabTalk

The Savvy Lab Technology Purchase

Technology is a basic component part of our lives. You cannot ignore it. An efficient lab needs the correct technology solution just as it needs the right mixture of employees, materials, pricing, quality, equipment, facilities and customers. The purchase of an integrated lab management software system should not be complex, confusing and uncertain. With the right research and knowledge, the decision should be straightforward.

Understand what you are trying to achieve. The answer is not as simple as software. Every lab has different needs and the solution will vary with those requirements. Lab software systems offer different options, variations in flexibility, and an assortment of add-ons. Decide where your priorities lie. Requirements can include optical expertise, hardware set up, configuration and support, specific operating platforms, customization and interfaces, onsite or remote training, installation, ongoing support and upgrades, lens data, networking and cabling, Internet service providers, firewalls and upgrades and lastly system pricing terms and financing. Remember that every solution will process 90% of your production. It's processing the other 10%, rife with problems and headaches, which differentiate the different solutions.

Budget for a complete installation. The cost of your new software system is only the beginning. Appreciate who will supply the computer hardware, cabling and networking. Remember if you decide to save costs by sourcing hardware or networking locally, most software suppliers will not support any issues or problems caused by equipment not supplied by them. Is it really worth the savings and the inevitable finger pointing? Every installation should include training, onsite installation and ongoing support. Find out how much training is included, who will provide the training and where it will occur. Discuss exactly how the onsite installation will take place. Ask how will the switch between your existing set up and the new system take place. Question how many support technicians are available. What are the regular support hours? What about emergencies? How experienced are the support technicians? Typically problems need to be deciphered between the software, hardware, networking, Rx prescription, lens type and material, the lab machinery and the lab operator. Does the supplier have the expertise to distinguish between these conflicting areas? Lastly, remember your own sweat equity. At the end of each installation, your in-house labor costs to implement a new lab management system will always represent your greatest investment.

Production is the basic role of every software solution. Examine how lens fabrication, Rx calculation, and optional tailoring will occur. Insist upon providing a list of your current lab machines to comprehend which can or cannot be interfaced. Variations in your machinery's internal software versions can affect their ability to be interfaced. Order entry is the face of your new system. Get a hands-on understanding of how closely it resembles, improves or changes your existing methodology. Remember to consider the big picture – if a new system provides three steps forward for every step backwards, is this sufficient to meet your needs? 3rd party interfaces such as WebMD, Eyefinity, Vision Web, lens and frame suppliers, and 3rd party coating companies are an integral part of your life. Appreciate exactly how these parties will be integrated. Accounting may or may not include automatic invoicing, pricing and discounts options. Lab lens pricing options and dis

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counts are often used as the great differentiators between you and your competitors. Different lab departments require specific solutions. Selecting a new lab management software system is the ideal time to review how your lens selection and picking, tray tracking, quality control, inventory ordering and receiving, and shipping procedures. Recognize what methods and options are important to you. At the end of each day, it is the subtle differences that delight or exacerbate each user. Labs make money by efficient volume processing. Each minor system improvement directly impacts the bottom line.

Knowledge in a good lab management system contributes to its success. From basic reports that cover costing, sales and usage trends to examining production job flow to lens spoilage / breakage monitoring. Customized reports can provide the edge over a competitor. Is your lens stock room overstocked? Why…. because you lack the knowledge provided by an inventory control system specifically designed to match your needs. Removing the unnecessary dead stock from your lens and frame departments can typically pay for a new lab management software system.

Communication is the key to many of your existing problems. Problems occur every day in every lab. Whether it is a missing PD or a broken lens, the solution is simple – communication. Just how efficiently the communication takes place depends on the solution. Electronic messaging by email or fax to your customers should be quick, simple and incredibly fast. Faxed end of day WIP reports, "live" Internet job tracking, remote order entry with or without a frame tracings and 3rd Party Vendor Reports are examples. Unhappy customers are not caused by an order being late – they are caused by lack of communication. With today's technology there is no excuse.

Internet access is available in every corner of the country. Examine how new technology can increase your sales, lower your costs and improve efficiency. Remote ordering either with or without a frame tracer is now an entrenched option every lab should be offering. Supplying a customer with the software and a frame tracer can cost less than a dollar per order. Compare that to the cost of couriering a frame, data entry, handling costs, lost patient-own-frame sales, and faster production times. Labs are eliminating 75% of job checking telephone calls by offering free "live" job checking service across the Internet. WebMD, Eyefinity and Vision Web are processing more and more volume every day. Customers are slowly but surely switching from faxes and phones to email. Lens suppliers are offering co-op dollars to labs that can electronically file monthly usage reports. Every option adds to your bottom and helps to justify a new lab management system.

References are your best friend. Lab owners and managers are a not known as a shy bunch. There is no reason for you to re-invent the wheel. Onsite visits to existing installations and detailed reference checks will answer you concerns. The choice to purchase a lab management software system is a clinical business decision. Do your homework and you will be delighted with the results.

Written by Steve Dombey, International Sales Manager of CC Systems. Since 1984, CC Systems has been a leading provider of integrated optical software solutions for wholesale surfacing and coating labs. For more information visit www.opticalonline.com.

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Visionary Thinking

in the lab :September 2005 LabTalk

The Realities of Remote Lab Ordering

Remote ordering technology has been kicked around in the optical industry for as long as computers have existed. Some countries are already electronically transmitting over 90% of lab orders. Some countries haven't even started. In North America, it exists; it works; yet it is only used by a small percentage of ECP's.

What is remote ordering? Simple - the electronic data transfer of a lab order. In it's simplest form, an ECP data entries a lab order, the lab receives a fax and re-enters the order into the lab' management software. Not a great deal of help! In it's purest form, remote ordering ensures all data in every order is verified for accuracy, prompts for a frame trace, eliminates out of range data, confirms no missing data, offers up-to-date customized lens data applicable to each lab, is simple and quick to use, seamlessly transfers the information across the Internet directly into the lab's management software, automatically acknowledges receipt of the order back to ECP and provides a complete history for reorders and remakes. A complete end-to-end solution allows the lab to process lab orders without any intervention. It can be fast, simple, and deadly accurate.

Experience counts. To be successful, remote ordering needs to offer a complete end-to-end solution – no glorified faxes. The hardware required by the ECP has to be inexpensive and the software easy to install and set up. Typically the ECP only needs to provide a Microsoft Windows computer and a connection to the Internet. The software required by the ECP should be self-installing with minimal supervision. Experience has proven that an ECP can be set up and trained by phone, thousands of miles away from a lab, without any on-site visit. The data entry required by the ECP has to fast, simple and accurate - faster than by phone. No one is suggesting remote ordering should cover 100% of all lab orders. Interaction is sometimes required. The only limiting factor should be whether the finished product could be overnight delivered back to the ECP from the lab. The goal of 90% remote ordering is achievable today.

How it should work. An ECP either enters the minimum data required in a separate software program provided by the lab or directly interfaces its existing practice management software with the lab's management software. The ECP decides whether or not to include a frame tracing. Lab orders are automatically transferred over the Internet to a central web site. The lab's management software seamlessly picks up these orders, prompts the lab to select a tray and automatically acknowledges receipt of the order back to the ECP. The lab can process the order with no additional data entry. The order has already been verified for accuracy. Labs are providing same day service for any electronic order received by 3:00 PM. For ECP's who cannot interface their practice management software with the lab's software, remote ordering can be simply used to electronically transmit the frame shape while manually transmit the lab order. This avoids any double data entry by the

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ECP and allows the lab to match the manual order with the electronic trace.

Frame tracing has come a long way. Today they are simple to use and maintain. Labs and manufacturers will dispute this but any modern tracer will work! As long as the tracer is regularly calibrated, it will provide sufficient data to edge a lens with 98% accuracy. The most important aspects in selecting the right tracer are which tracer can the lab support blindfolded and which manufacturer provides the best local support. Tracers are typically being installed at the ECP by their local lab, which take responsibility to train the ECP and support the tracer. The good news is that the price of frame tracers is dropping dramatically as the labs purchase tracers in bulk and manufacturers realize the benefits of volumes sales to retailers rather than as specialty items to labs. The logic everyone really needs to understand is the psychology of fitting a finished lens into a frame. No lens fits perfectly (the horror!). This is not putting a square brick in a square hole. Fitting a lens in a frame is an art form. The accuracy of the finished product depends on the fitter's experience and what each individual fitter considers to be an acceptable fit. The benefits however are tremendous: same day service, no delays in moving the frame, no frame breakages, and no more lost sales because of "Patient Own Frame" orders.

Different scenarios that ECP's and labs have successfully implemented remote ordering:

- Edged orders - Including a frame tracing eliminates the need to courier a frame to the lab, improves customer service and allows patients to keep their old frames while new lens are processed.
- Uncut orders – Today many ECP's have edgers. Remote ordering uncut orders that include a frame trace greatly improve the lens thickness. However even without a tracing, uncut remote ordering is fast, simple and accurate
- Smaller labs – One hour superstores, finishing and smaller surfacing labs are using remote ordering to transmit orders to larger wholesale labs for out of stock (or range) or specialty lens that they do not carry in-house. Remote ordering thereby allows them to offer a greater range of products to their customers.
- Lab to lab - More and more wholesale labs are co-operating to transfer orders internally between them. E.G. "Lab A" may send all glass orders to "Lab B" using remote ordering, thereby eliminating any data entry by the receiving lab.
- Practice Management Software – Numerous ECP's are using practice management software that can be directly interfaced with lab management software. Remote ordering technology provides the link between the two systems without either party having to re-enter any data.

Who pays for remote tracing and how do you justify it? That's a good question and there is no simple answer. The answer is totally dependent on volume. The

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more remote ordering is used by each individual ECP, the more likely it is that the lab will absorb all costs. However if remote ordering is seldom used, saved for rush orders or patients using their own frame, the lab will likely pass all costs onto the ECP. The costs include the tracer, the software and any support required – typically around $150 per month based on a five-year lease. Let's examine two scenarios. The ECP uses the remote ordering software and the tracer provided by the lab to send an average of five orders a day. The lab will often absorb all the costs in order to electronically receive a hundred orders per month. Even at $150 per month, that's only $1.50 per order. Cheaper than paying for the frame to be couriered! The cost can drop to $0.25 cents for uncut orders not requiring a frame tracer. Alternately, the ECP uses remote ordering once a week to save a rush order or a patient using his or her own frame. The lab will typically pass all costs onto the ECP but the ECP has saved four extra sales a month. Some labs use lens coupons to offset the costs. The lab may invoice the ECP monthly for the cost of remote ordering but provides an equal value in lens coupons. Other labs see such benefit in remote ordering that they offer instant rebates to the ECP for every order transmitted electronically. Remember remote ordering saves the cost of the courier to pick up the frame, the cost of data entry, the cost of data entry mistakes, the cost of handling frames and breakages, provides faster service, superior lens thicknesses on uncut lenses, superior edging techniques, competition to larger labs, increased volumes and general goodwill.

Bottom line is remote ordering works. The technology works and the results prove it. The only issue left to resolve is the marketing of remote ordering. Very few labs in North America have been successful. Even some of the huge multi-nationals have failed to spread remote ordering technology. Why? Change takes time and it takes effort. However there are a handful of labs, which have embraced the technology, are already receiving 50% of lab orders electronically and have every intention of raising the bar to 90% within one year. They market and support remote ordering at every opportunity. They include handouts with their lenses, invoices and statements; actively promote the technology from their websites; offer free software demos from their websites or free CD's to prove how simple and easy it is to use; regularly attend trade shows and education seminars about remote ordering; encourage their order entry staff to discuss the option with ECP's that still phone in orders; provide comprehensive training, support and user manuals; and have sales reps that constantly preach the benefits. Have you ever called a lab and been left on hold for two minutes? Did that lab play snazzy elevator music while you waited or did it play prerecorded promotional information about remote ordering? There's nothing like leaving an ECP on hold for two minutes to prove the point!

Remote ordering technology works. Now the labs can either go out and sell it or wait for ECP's to demand it!

Written by Steve Dombey, International Sales Manager of CC Systems. Since 1984, CC Systems is a leading provider of integrated optical software solutions for wholesale surfacing and coating labs. Since 2001, CC Systems have seamlessly processed over 750,000 remote lab orders via the Internet. For more information and a free demo visit www.opticalonline.com.

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Visionary Thinking

September 2004 Optical Lab Products

The eTech Phenomenon and the Optical Lab

The Internet has changed the way we communicate; for many labs, it has also changed the way they do business.

Benjamin Disraeli, the 19th century English Prime Minister and author once stated, *"There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics."* Whether that's true or not, we cannot ignore the statistics on the use of the Internet. By 1994, about 13% of adults over 18 were using it; by 2003, the figure approached 70% of the total population of the United States! And over half of the users have used the Internet to make a purchase.

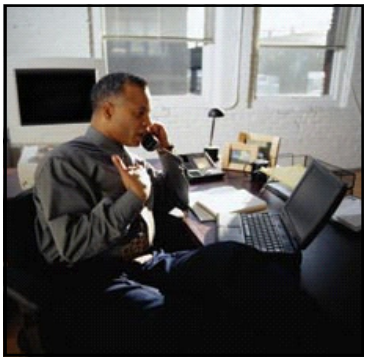
The implications for our industry are impossible to ignore. Consumers who are comfortable with, and are already using the Internet for personal purchases, will do so in their business lives as well. About 76% of people aged 18 to 24 use the Internet, and 72% of those 25 to 34 do so as well. These are fascinating statistics, and ones that will continue to grow rapidly in the near *future.*

Several companies are jockeying to become the premier e-commerce site for the optical industry. Many offer a variety of products for true, one-stop shopping for the dispenser. Individual labs are also working to develop their Internet strategies and offerings. Here is an overview on how three labs are working with their software providers to offer high-tech ordering and tracking to their customers. The companies offer an explanation of how technology has changed their businesses—and what it can do for yours.

—Jim Grootegoed

Six years ago, NEA Optical in Jonesboro, AR, made the switch to C.C. System's technology and remote ordering system—and it's never looked back. "This is the way ordering systems should operate," says Jim Evans, owner of NEA Optical. "An order or frame is never lost, all the data is entered accurately and completely, and we save a tremendous amount of time." A member of Optical Services International, NEA Optical is part of an elite group of approximately 35 labs that are on the cutting-edge of technology.

As a full service lab, NEA Optical runs approximately 250 orders each day for its service areas, which include Arizona, southern Missouri, western Tennessee, northwest Mississippi, and parts of western Kentucky. About 40% of the company's orders come in electronically, sent seamlessly through Eyefinity. The only time NEA Optical manually handles the order is if an ECP calls with changes to the order. Otherwise, when the order comes in, it goes into a work tray, lenses are placed, and the order proceeds directly to the lab.



C.C. Systems customers, like NEA Optical, can put orders in through Eyefinity, which then get downloaded directly into Labzilla laboratory software. Alternatively, customers can enter orders through C.C. System's inter

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nal system, opticalonline.com. Those orders also get downloaded into Labzilla for a seamless process.

According to Evans, ECP's choose NEA Optical because of the lab's focus on high-quality, high-end premium products and services. The company's goal is to increase the probability of success in growing its customers' practices and establishing a good relationship with them. With its free Online Job Status service, NEA Optical allows customers to electronically check their jobs at any stage through neaoptical.com. It's an added convenience for ECP's to locate their orders.

With its free Online Job Status service, NEA Optical allows customers to electronically check their jobs at any stage through neaoptical.com.

Frame Tracing:

Approximately 40% of the company's orders are for frame tracing, and because of the company's years of technology experience, tracing accuracy easily reaches 98%. "We have the technique and experience in frame tracing, that's why we have a high level of accuracy," Evans says. "We know how to utilize the technology to the fullest extent."

High-tech ordering and tracing can be a problem for some ECP's, as some practices are skeptical of using the system. The solution: Evans offers his customers the opportunity to install the system for three to four weeks with absolutely no risk. After trying the system and understanding its time-saving benefits and efficiency, about 90% of practices decide to adopt the technology. In fact, Evans has hooked up 12 additional customers in the past six months.

"We've seen a large amount of growth in the ordering system," Evans explains. How does he view the future of remote ordering and tracing? "It's going to grow tremendously, especially for smaller to mid-size labs.

Compared to bigger labs, we are able to make decisions faster and put new systems in without much time delay."

Evans also sees a boost in remote ordering and tracing as lens vendors help labs to persuade their customers to utilize the technology. "There's an opportunity to partner with lens vendors to increase the installations of the technology," says Evans. How? Evans has gotten some lens manufacturers involved with supporting this system by offering lens vouchers to NEA Optical customers who install and use the system. "The vouchers virtually help our customers cover the cost of the system," Evans explains. Incentives like these will help labs and ECP's implement more high-tech software for an easier, efficient, time-saving ordering process.

Visionary Thinking

September 2006 LabTalk

Use Lab Management Software to Search Out Problems

Every lab understands this story…a lab processes ninety-nine lenses perfectly; makes one little mistake and the ECP switches to another lab. Is this fair? Maybe, maybe not? Avoidable — Yes! Your lab management software is like a well-trained investigator, equipped with everything you need to search out problems before they cost you money.

Technology exists in almost every lab management software system to calculate the Rx and communicate with lab equipment. The technology also exists to avoid mistakes, communicate quickly and efficiently with ECPs and track problems. Use technology properly, and the bottom line is that 99 percent of all mistakes can be avoided, and the other one percent can be efficiently communicated, tracked, reported and prevented in the future.

Quality assurance requires very little set up and is very effective at eliminating mistakes. Configure your tray tracking technology so that if orders require a tint, an outsourced coating, or a specific series of steps, those trays must be scanned at the appropriate tray tracking station in the correct order and before being shipped.

Technology can be configured to abruptly stop an order from being processed incorrectly. Each computer can be a separate tray tracking station or used for multiple purposes. An order with an outsourced anti-reflective coating should be scanned when it goes out and again when it comes back from the coating company, before it can be shipped out to the ECP. Simple to set up and very effective — another annoying mistake that will never happen again.

Tracking employees can give you valuable information. This is not "Big Brother" is watching but is important to understand why mistakes happen and who is making those mistakes. It is common sense to learn from your mistakes. Your technology should allow each employee to have separate logins within your lab management software so that every date, time and employee is logged in for every computer entry.

Printing different work sheets depending on the type of lens order is another effective method in avoiding mistakes. Outsourced lens orders can be configured so that no grinding data is printed on the work sheet. Try processing that order in-house by mistake! Robotic equipment can have unique bar codes printed on the work sheets, which are automatically read by the generator or edger.

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Visionary Thinking

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Your lab management software should provide you with regular data updates to calculate and process lenses. Downloading these updates directly from the Internet is quick and simple. Every time a lens breaks, analyze whether or not the lens data within your lab management software needs to be fine-tuned to meet your requirements. Do not ask employees to remember to over-ride settings for a particular lens or prescription. Do not try to substitute the parameters from an existing lens on your database to process a new lens. Every lens is unique. Teach your system and data to learn from prior mistakes. Every one of these examples can be pre-configured in your lab management software.

Communication resolves most customer service issues. No one gets upset when a limited number of orders are late. This is inevitable. What the customer does mind is not knowing what is going on with their work. What drives the ECP crazy is when a patient arrives to pick up an order on the promised date and the order is not ready. The following are examples of how technology can make communication faster, trouble-free and more successful.

Technology should not replace your personal touch and relationships with your customers, it should compliment it. ECPs still want to hear from you and see you in person to maintain relationships. Technology provides you with the tools to communicate when the personal touch is not required. Electronic messaging by fax or e-mail is very cost effective. Each customer can be pre-configured to receive either a fax or an e-mail.

Instead of using the telephone, paying for long distance charges, being left on hold or playing telephone tag, configure your lab management system with pre-configured messages. How often are messages not relayed to your customers due to the hassle involved? Orders are delayed every day due to missing order entry data, out-of-stock lens or breakages.

During order entry, job checking, inventory control or entering spoilage data, simple drop down lists of pre-configured messages should allow you to electronically send a message by fax or e-mail. With three or four keystrokes the message is sent, referencing that specific order and a record is automatically attached to the order.

Automatic acknowledgements by fax or e-mail can be set up every time a tray is assigned to an order. This is especially useful for orders received electronically across the Internet via your lab management remote order software, VisionWeb or Eyefinity. Keeping ECPs up-to-date with order progress is equally simple with technology. ECPs should automatically receive end-of-day WIP reports by fax or e-mail.

Even better is providing ECPs with live data via the Internet, displaying the exact status of every one of their orders in the lab. ECPs will then know which orders were shipped last night from the lab, which patients to telephone to pick up orders before the order has even arrived and which orders will be delayed. ECPs

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can even warn you when they notice orders being stuck at a particular tray tracking station. Another pair of eyes ensuring no mistakes is invaluable. This information has proven to eliminate up to 80 percent of calls from the ECP.

Electronic messaging by fax or e-mail also provides a fast method to send mass messages to either groups of ECPs or all your customers. Type one message, press one button and send the same message to hundreds of ECPs. Keep your ECPs up-to-date with news about new lens availability, price changes, product promotions, holiday hours and staff changes.

Knowledge is Power

There is nothing worse than repeating the same mistakes over and over. Your lab management software provides you with reporting, production monitoring and spoilage monitoring. Reporting can be customized to meet your needs.

Variations and fluctuations in sales, costs, productivity and profitability should raise immediate red flags. Do not wait a month to find out why an ECP's average order volume has dropped. Do not wait several days to discover your edger needs calibrating. Reporting and tracking can be set up with the correct technology to provide instant feedback. Production monitoring can display a variety of reports including daily activity reports with comparisons to prior time periods, average time in lab reports, a job flow monitor displaying the number of orders at each work station, or data entry statistics by employee.

It is possible to customize your own reports. Spoilage and redo reports can instantly flag changes and increases from your normal levels, broken down by time period, customer, and tray tracking station. No lab likes to admit to breakage but it is a fact. Using technology to track and report breakage will provide the information to avoid the same error in the future.

The effort required to gain a new account is huge. However with technology, it requires very little set up to seamlessly streamline your production. The time, effort and cost required to track, report, eliminate mistakes and communicate with your customers is very low. The results will astound you and your customers. The word of mouth referrals that result will feed directly to your bottom line, when perfection is your goal!

Written by Steve Dombey, CC Systems. Since 1987, CC Systems has been a leading provider of lab management software solutions for wholesale surfacing, coating, finishing labs, and integrated retail chains with labs to over 150 labs worldwide. For more information visit www.opticalonline.com.