

My name is Brian Glynn. I am an optician certified by the American Board of Opticianry. My job is to properly fit patients with the corrective eyewear prescribed by their optometrist or ophthalmologist. As a professional I take great pride in providing the patient with a pair of glasses that fits their optical, fashion, and lifestyle needs. I have spent a tremendous amount of time researching lens technology, frame quality, lab quality and overall service and am quite particular in the manufacturing of the product for the patient. I am confident that my patients get the finest quality eyewear made by diligent craftsmen and opticians. I am very aware of my patient's needs and go above and beyond in providing them a quality product in a timely manner on a daily basis. Unfortunately, I cannot speak with such confidence when I refer to product received from the Davis Vision lab.

Davis Vision, as you are well aware, requires us to use their privately owned labs. We have no control in the product once it has been ordered. I am forced to inform patients that these glasses can take up to three weeks to make and in many cases, they come back wrong and need to be remade. I have tried everything conceivable to alleviate these problems without sacrificing the quality to the patient, however it is to no avail. I have gone so far as to give very specific instructions in the ordering and calling customer service to confirm them, only to get the product back incorrect. In some more drastic scenarios I have had to bring the patient in to see the poorly made finished product just so they know I am not playing some type of game with them. In addition I have no guarantee that the frame is going to make it to the lab at all. Recently, I had a patient, who ordered glasses in August 2009 and did not receive them complete and correct until February 2010. This patient frame was lost twice, damaged once and had her prescription change in the time period waiting for these glasses, thus delaying the final product again. I would be happy to furnish this patient's information to the Senate if they would like.

Determining if the glasses are correct, as in the case of the patient I just mentioned, is not a time consuming and difficult task. We use the ANSI standards for measuring the tolerance of a pair of eyewear, An industry wide set standard regardless of state. Every reputable optician and lab tech will have these easily accessible to them when inspecting a finished eyewear product. Yet when product comes back from Davis labs, they are clearly not inspected. The prescription is often beyond tolerance levels, if not completely wrong and the frame usually mangled or manipulated in some way. The most extreme examples include a frame coming without lenses in them and sunglasses coming back un-tinted. What this says to me is Davis vision feels they are above the standards the rest of the industry uses. What baffles me more is why it takes so long to make a product incorrectly.

Dr. Wende, in the public hearing on house bill 2101 on April 28, 2008 stated the Davis Vision labs are state of the art with the latest technology and equipment. Yet, they do not have the capability to manufacture the highest quality lens for someone who is heavily nearsighted a group that needs the best technology in their lenses, nor can they produce the latest form of progressive lenses or no-line bifocals. This is a state of the art technology that has been out for several years yet is unavailable to the Davis customer. This leaves my patient, their customer, without the benefit of getting the eyewear that best fits their needs. Davis will no doubt tell you that the patient can always pay out of pocket and be reimbursed as having gone out-of-network, yet consumer trends show that people will more often than not go only where their insurance is accepted and will stay within their insurance companies scope of coverage, regardless of what the optician or optometrist advise. As a consumer I can empathize with the patient when I have to tell them that their insurance will not cover, in any way, the lens they need. As a professional I can say it infuriates me that my patient walks out with a product that does not meet my standard of quality and I have to put my name on it.

We have all heard the adage "that time is money". In the optical industry that is no exception. In some ways it is more prevalent here than anywhere. The timeliness of receiving the product is atrocious. As someone who is a pediatric specialist, I understand the importance of getting a child, especially one with a learning or processing disability their corrective eyewear as fast as possible and 100% correct. With the three week window we deal with regarding Davis Vision, these patients are suffering. Often times the lab is incapable of understanding or manufacturing the complicated prescriptions involved with pediatric lenses. In these situations we lose more time because we have to spend an hour on the phone for every patient that has a specific need that Davis Vision has complications meeting. There is no other lab that I deal with, or most of us in this field deal with, that we call and get a customer service person with no

knowledge of the product. You will spend fifteen minutes speaking to them only to get passed on to a supervisor who knows just as little as the person you were previously speaking with. If you are brash enough to have them forward your call to a lab manager so that you at least are speaking with someone who is comprehending your requests, chances are you will be on hold for another 20 minutes. In the end this is just more time away from the patients; more time devoted to the red tape than to their needs.

As I stated earlier I take a lot of pride in my work. I am a product of my environment. I was raised working class, with a sense of right and wrong and when it comes to my job I was raised that there is only one way to do your job and that is to do it right. All I want is to be able to do my job at the highest level. I do not want to have to worry that a customer of Davis Vision is not going to get the product they need because I am handcuffed by an unfair business model that is fast becoming a monopoly. As a member of this industry I despise having to put my name on that product.

Now, Davis has gone to a new length to make private practice irrelevant in the market place. The opening of nine of their own retail outlets in the greater Pittsburgh area will surely mean a loss of patients for several independent doctors and opticians. They have in each store the ability to manufacture a pair of glasses, from start to finish in the same day. Because I am forced to use a Davis lab my patient has to wait three weeks. This is entirely unfair. If you are going to allow your corporate owned stores to use their own facilities I should be able to use mine. The vertical integration of Davis Vision has shifted the balance of competition. The conspiracy theorist in me often wonders the flooding of the market with Davis Vision, yet limiting the practices ability to properly make the glasses was part of a master plan to make Vision Works the "white knight" of optical retailers because they can take your insurance and still do the job in the same day. It seems like an elaborate pyramid scheme or movie plot but it is something I live and see every day.

I want to thank you for allowing me this forum to speak and look forward to any questions you may have for me. I am not naïve enough to think that I am going to instantly change your mind. I am hopeful that you will leave here and say to yourselves "I want to know more." I am confident that at that point you will see what we see day in and day out and help us move the industry away from these pending monopolies on all fronts, and closer to a competitive balance.