



## Innovative Ideas Energize VM's 2012 Summit

**A close up look at the day's presentations and personalities**

NEW YORK—VM's Global Leadership Summit has blossomed into a springtime tradition of sorts, heralding a new season filled with fresh ideas and exciting concepts spanning cutting edge trends in technology, health care and business. For the 6th year in a row, decision makers within the optical community gathered here before the start of Vision Expo East for thought-provoking discussion, dialogue and guidance, with presentations from experts both within and outside the optical arena.

The theme of this year's Summit: Innovation Everywhere—Embracing Creativity: Rethinking Competition hit all the right notes and then some. The day-long event, held at The Times Center in midtown Manhattan on March 21, drew more than 300 attendees. Topics presented by this year's speakers covered eye opening new technologies, such as a smartphone attachment that allows the users to assess their visual acuity and an artificial retina that enables the blind to see. Other speakers

offered a glimpse of changes that promise to disrupt day-to-day ways of doing business and new models that are influencing all businesses.

Fitting the "Innovation Everywhere" theme, the lead sponsor of this year's event, Essilor was named among The World's Most Innovative Companies by Forbes magazine. For more on Essilor, see page S8. Supporting sponsors of the VM Summit were Alcon, CareCredit, DAC Vision, Luxottica, Shamir and International Vision Expo.

On the following pages, you'll find a comprehensive recap of the day's events and highlights of the five sessions as well as pictures of both speakers and attendees. For more on the VM Summit, including PDFs of presentations and a slide show, be sure to visit [VisionMondaySummit.com/2012](http://VisionMondaySummit.com/2012). Look for videos of the presentations, including Q&A sessions and interviews with attendees, coming soon to the Summit website. ■

—A VM Staff Report

## Sessions and Speakers

### Innovation Mandate...S3

**Mickey McManus**, President, CEO and Principal, MAYA Design  
**John Shagoury**, President, the Eliza Corporation  
**Bart Foster**, Founder and CEO, SoloHealth

### Innovation and the Eye...S4

**Ramesh Raskar Ph.D.**, Co-founder, EyeNetra; Associate Professor, MIT Media Lab  
**Steve Willey**, Co-founder, CEO and Director, Innovega  
**Barbara Barclay**, General Manager, Tobii North America  
**Jim Little**, Vice President of R&D, Second Sight Medical Product

### Lessons of Innovation...S5

**Robert Safian**, Editor and Managing Director, *Fast Company Magazine*

### Digital Commerce Innovations...S6

**John Graham**, General Manager, Glasses.com  
**David Geipel**, Founder, Qwasi, Inc.

### Maintaining an Innovative Edge in Vision Care...S9

**Alan Ulsifer**, OD, CEO, President and Chair, Fyidocors  
**William "Buzz" Hollis**, President and CEO, Doctors Vision Center  
**Don Bye**, Vice President of Optical Services, Shopko

## Health Care Model Under Siege as Patient Empowerment Grows

**I**nnovation Mandate, the first panel of the Summit, explored the “disruptors” in today’s model of health care delivery for both providers and health care companies alike. The theme of the morning session explored the growing influence and impact of the empowered patient through the eyes of three health care experts from outside the optical arena.

During the panel discussion, Mickey McManus, president and CEO of MAYA Designs, a technology design and innovation lab, spoke to why innovation matters today and said the three components of developing innovation depends on creativity, agility and insight. “It all comes back to solving a real person’s problem and figuring out where they fit in.”

McManus pointed to several trends that are changing at a lightening paced speed. The cost of complex products and systems has dropped dramatically and soon “there will be more transitors than grains of rice.” The explosion of information, which used to be stored in books, then radio and TV is now on the Internet. “Which brings us to the people—where do they fit in?” McManus said people aren’t always able to catch up with the ever-changing wave of technology. “But this is where innovation can happen, when you figure



*MAYA Designs’ Mickey McManus spoke about how technology is affecting innovation today.*



*John Shagoury of Eliza Corporation concentrated on the dialogue between patients and health care providers.*



*Bart Foster of SoloHealth referred to the self-service mindset of today’s consumer.*

out how to close the gap between the information and the people. We are at an intersection and you, as health care providers, need to focus on people—your customers, clients and suppliers.”

John Shagoury, president of Eliza Corporation, a leading provider of integrated health care communications, continued the “people” thread started by McManus and said, “It’s all about engaging people and focusing on more coordinated trends. The biggest challenge in health care today is to drive engagement by making it personable and adding value.” He stressed the value of personalizing health care communications and said, “patients need to know the message is for them. It’s all about meeting them where they are, adapting to their needs so they don’t have to change their behavior, and making the delivery acceptable to patients.”

Shagoury said providers need to stay on top of how people want to receive information, be it through blogs, social media or even member-to-member forms of communication. “Health care is more complex because the rules of engagement keep changing. We at Eliza Corporation believe in driving healthy trends through more coordinated communications.”

Bart Foster, founder and CEO of SoloHealth, featuring the next generation of health care kiosks, referred to today’s self-service environ-

ment of ATMs, store check-outs and hotel check-ins, saying “self-service health care is coming.” The kiosks are their own “ecosystem” which can empower people to start the diagnosis process (through BMI, BP readings, as well as vision screenings) and then go on to find a local doctor or OD. “It keeps coming back to the question consumers keep asking: ‘What can I do for myself?’”

Foster stressed that health care providers need to reach people where they are, in retail locations, “since consumers visit supermarkets an average of 2.1 times per week. In the past, retail clinics didn’t work because they weren’t economical, but that’s all changing. We need to stop trying to regulate the marketplace and reach consumers where they are.”

He stressed the benefits of kiosks directing people to the appropriate provider in their area. “If we can educate a consumer about their conditions, we can make the system more efficient for providers by raising the bar and having the technology work as a history taking triage tool.”

Foster said he believes, “There is an opportunity for the eyecare industry to be part of the overall health care system. We are entering a period of hyper growth and our biggest challenge may be what not to do.” ■

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*The panel (l to r) Mickey McManus, John Shagoury and Bart Foster answers questions from the audience.*

## ‘Innovation and The Eye’ Moves From Science Fiction to Science Fact

The technology session titled Innovation and the Eye offered Summit attendees a fascinating look at how four new and very different technologies are extending the capabilities of the human visual system and expanding our concept of eyecare. Following an introduction by Andrew Karp, group editor, lenses and technology for Jobson’s Retail Optical Group, each of the four speakers discussed how their company’s products and systems—visual acuity and cataract testing using mobile phone apps, contact lens-enabled, high definition video eyewear, eye scanning, and an artificial retina—can benefit consumers and potentially, the optical industry.

Ramesh Raskar, co-founder of EyeNetra and associate professor at MIT Media Lab, began the session by introducing NETRA (Near Eye Tool for Refractive Assessment), a low-cost mobile system he helped develop that uses a cell phone and simple hardware attachment to perform an accurate visual acuity test. Speaking about the potential market for NETRA, particularly in the developing world, Raskar noted that there are “more than 4 billion people walking around with a mobile, scientific instrument in their pockets.”

Raskar told Summit attendees that NETRA represents, “not just a diagnostic system for refraction but a new ecosystem. Instead of shining a light into the eye, we’re exploiting high resolution LCDs that can measure refraction in a few seconds. Our system is completely digital. There are no moving parts, no electricity. It takes measurements comparable to other instruments.”

Raskar said the technology, which has been commercialized by EyeNetra, has the ability to disrupt the eyeglass industry, and noted its potential in the developed world. “We’re not part of that industry, though, so we have to close that loop,” he noted. He also spoke about CATRA, a low-cost, mobile system to detect cataracts that Raskar and his colleagues at MIT Media Lab developed,



Jobson’s Andrew Karp (second from left) with Innovation and The Eye panel speakers (l to r) Ramesh Raskar, Barbara Barclay, Steve Willey and Jim Little.

saying, “It’s like a weather map. We can give you a map of the cloudiness in your eye.”

Steve Willey, co-founder, CEO and director of Innovega, spoke about the potential applications for contact lens-enabled HD/3D Video Eyewear, which his company is developing. The many uses he cited included consumer entertainment, navigation, social media, augmented reality, defense and low vision. Although people currently use mobile devices for these purposes, Willey noted their shortcomings.

“Mobile devices are limited to a three- to four-inch screen,” he said. “Our eyewear-based displays, using our patented iOptik contact lens system coupled with our stylish, video eyewear gives the wearer an immersive viewing experience and anytime, everywhere media access. The iOptik contact lens features a tiny ‘lenslet’ for viewing the display. It’s the secret sauce that we’ll provide to eyewear and contact lens OEMs.”

Willey said he believes video eyewear is a natural bridge from the optical industry to the consumer electronics industry.

The third speaker was Barbara Barclay, general



EyeNetra co-founder Ramesh Raskar demonstrating the EyeNetra device for the audience.

manager, Tobii North America. Speaking about Tobii’s proprietary eye tracking technology and the data that it can provide, Barclay said, “The eyes are the mirror of the mind.” Citing the widespread use of eye tracking and gaze recognition technology, Barclay predicted, “In two years, eye tracking technology will

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## ‘Generation Flux’ Equipped to Deal With Change

Robert Safian, editor and managing director of *Fast Company Magazine*, started his keynote session, Lessons of Innovation, by describing what *Fast Company* was and what sets it apart from other publications that focus on more traditional business segments. “We consider ourselves non-traditional business media focused on more creative businesses,” he stated.

It is a distinction that has put the publication in the unique position of seeking out and featuring up-and-coming, as well as established, organizations poised to make major changes in the world of business. “These changes are happening dramatically,” Safian said. “The idea of a global, mobile, interconnected world we once imagined is the world we are living in today. This is not the change and hyperbole of the ’90s. It’s real, it’s broad and it’s dramatic and we have to learn to deal with it.”

Safian described our current fiscally and socially unsettled times as “Generation Flux” and clarified that the term applies to both this period of accelerating change in our economy and to a group of people. “It is not defined by an age but more a psychographic, a type of person best equipped to deal with change,” he explained. “A person with a fixed mindset believes when you become an adult you are who you are and agree with that old saying ‘you can’t teach an old dog new tricks.’ A growth mindset recognizes that you’re only beginning when you do something new and that you will not be good at

it. In fact, you will probably be bad. There will be embarrassment and they don’t care. They know that with time and hard work they will get it.

“Disruption is rippling through everything, every industry. It’s happening everywhere. Today, we recognize that we don’t know what the new rules are and for the first time in a very long time we are living in a world of chaos,” he acknowledged. “This is an opportunity for some of us, those of us who can take advantage of it. That’s who I consider Generation Flux. Generation Flux is a mindset and a willingness to adapt. The most important skill in the age of flux is the ability to add new skills.”

According to Safian, “Nostalgia is a trap in this age. It is not helpful to be stuck on what worked before; we have to move forward. Do not pigeon-hole yourself or your business about what it is or where it might go. There are fast companies and there are fast parts of slow companies. You have to figure out to what extent you are willing to be the fast part of a company and how resilient you will be to resistance.

“We can change people’s perceptions of us and the things that we do if we focus on the possibilities and not the fear,” he said. “Forget the fear of failure. Failure is a badge of honor. Failure breeds and encourages risk taking which is endemic to Generation Flux.”

Safian left the room with this thought, “Charles



*Robert Safian of Fast Company Magazine spoke of broad and dramatic change.*

Darwin, the father of evolution, said it best over 100 years ago: ‘It is not the strongest species that will survive. It is not the most intelligent. It is the one most adaptable to change.’ ■

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## Consumer Engagement and Mobile Are Impacting Digital Commerce

Proving that innovation is alive and well in all sectors of business, the afternoon session immediately following keynote speaker Robert Safian focused on advancements in digital commerce. This session featured John Graham, general manager for Glasses.com, and David Geipel, founder of mobile e-commerce firm QWASI.

Graham spent time at Glasses.com's parent company 1-800-CONTACTS before making the switch to launch the eyewear site two years ago. According to him, optical patients are dissatisfied because of pressure placed on them in an "uncomfortable decision-making environment." He pointed out that a regular retail location's often times has limited selection. And yet, not all is rose-colored on the web, Graham noted. "The online business models have sprouted up around closeout opportunities with incredibly low prices and enormous selection. We've all seen the 'designer eyewear for less' ads. Because so many online eyewear sellers are price focused, it seems like a race to the bottom," he said.

"We think the power of brands is important for a sustainable business model and only buy directly," Graham said. Glasses.com is looking to provide a really good interpretation of the licensed brand in a multimedia rich environment. The company verifies every prescription and is mostly interested in selling to the customers they already have. "We don't do too much work to find new customers because the old ones always come back, having found it easy to work



*John Graham of Glasses.com talked about patient satisfaction and the power of brands.*

with us. Our goal is to have the reality of our customers exceed their expectations," he explained.

The session's second panelist came from outside the world of optical, but is acutely familiar with the retailing world. At mobile e-commerce firm QWASI, David Geipel began his presentation with "SoLoMo" – or social, local mobile. "Today's consumers are highly engaged, they are using technology to find their services. So how can you work to make that as seamless for them as possible?" he asked the audience.

Utilizing raw data, Geipel explained that 73 percent of all consumers are texting, while the same amount are taking a picture on their mobile device. Another statistic: 29 percent of consumers use a social networking site on their mobile phone. Ultimately, Geipel showed that texting is the number



*David Geipel, founder of mobile e-commerce firm QWASI, focused his remarks on "SoLoMo": social, local mobile.*

one reason people use their phones today. "Mobile is very personal. It's in your hand, it's with you all the time. As a business, you have to have a mobile strategy," he emphasized.

And just where should today's businesses focus their attention? Mostly via text messaging, Geipel explained. He explained that apps are not right for every business and mobile sites only moderately engage users. But it's mobile marketing, including texting a keyword, scheduling reminders, post-visit surveys and pick-up notices that are most useful.

Geipel's last piece of advice to businesses operating on and off the web today? "Quickly create a Facebook and Twitter presence and start connecting. Keep in mind that they are not really free—it does take time and money to stand out." ■

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# Sights and Sounds of 'Innovation Everywhere'



Bruce Steffey of National Vision (l) and Bob Rymeski from Hilco (r).



Shamir's Ranaan Naftalovich's listens intently during one of the morning sessions.



(L to R) Vision-Ease's Douglas Hepper, Luxottica's David Plogmann, Essilor's Howard Purcell and The Foundation for Eye Health Awareness's Mike Daley.



Patrick Devlyn Jr. of Devlyn Optical (l) and Gerard Santinelli of Santinelli International (r).



@mickeymcmanus: the afternoon of #vmsummit with @rsafian had a delightful exploration of #genflux and secrets behind numbered lists of companies and people



Retweeted by @FastCompany: "No one thinks they're part of a @FastCompany. Sometimes you have to be the one to bring on change." - @rsafian #VMSummit



#vmsummit premier sponsor @essilor's Dr. Howard Purcell tells crowd he "feels like Oprah"—each attendee is taking home an essilor gift



Retweeted by glassescom: "Figure out what you do well and do it really well." - John Graham @glassescom #vmsummit



"The future is sooner and stranger as you think. We're at the beginning of the future." as shared by Marc Ferrara



Does Dr Raskar believe you will create devices that evolve beyond correction diagnostics to diseases diagnostics?



Care Credit's Jennifer Buildt and Randall Baldwin.



(L to R) The Vision Council's Deborah Castor and Ed Greene, with Luxottica's Andrea Dorigo and Jobson's Bill Scott.



(L to R) Patricia Thomas of Northeastern Eye Institute with James Galinsky of Zyloware Eye-wear and Maggie Jordan also of Northeastern Eye Institute.



Retweeted by rocoptical: “Social media is very quickly going to play a role in self-service healthcare.” @Bart\_Foster @SoloHealth #VMsummit



For Barbara Barclay: So what is one eye tracking tip for retail locations: color? Product? Presentation? A person greeting at the door?



If technology is driving consumer empowerment, how does the healthcare provider side need to shift re workflow and compensation?



“In silicon valley, if you fail at something, people want you more. It breeds and encourages risk-taking” - @rsafian



(L to R) Christine Camsuzou of PPG Industries Inc., Reade Fahs of National Vision and Roy Hessel, OD of EyeBuyDirect.



(L to R) C&E Vision's Brad Shapiro, Luxottica's Holly Rush, Vision West's Joseph Mallinger, OD and GPN's Jay Binkowitz.



Alcon's Dwight Akerman, OD.

## Essilor's Purcell Offers A Lesson on Innovation

**W**hen it comes to innovation, Essilor International is no stranger to the concept. The award-winning lens maker was named to Forbes Magazine's 2011 list of “The World's Most Innovative Companies,” clocking in at Number 25 on the prestigious list.



As the Lead Sponsor of VM's Global Summit, Essilor's vice president of customer development Howard Purcell, OD, FAAO spoke about “how critical innovation is going to be to our future in this industry.” He challenged attendees “to find ways to innovate in the optical space.”

Purcell urged the audience of clinicians and industry executives to focus on ways “that will give us the customization and individualization that many of our patients are looking for. We all need to push the envelope and continue to innovate.”

On a lighter note, Purcell told the crowd, he “felt like Oprah” since each attendee would be taking home an Essilor product as a gift—which he fittingly described as “glasses with three of our new innovations—Crizal UV, Optifog and the Xperio polarized lens.” ■

## Leveraging Independents' Power, Being a 'Selling' Group, Finding 'Innovation Through Service'

Concluding *Vision Monday's* 2012 Global Leadership Summit was the session on Maintaining an Innovative Edge in Vision Care, presented by Alan Ulsifer, OD, CEO, president and chair of FYidoctors; William "Buzz" Hollis, president and CEO of Doctors Vision Center; and Don Bye, VP of Optical Services for Shopko.

Describing the formation and evolution of FYidoctors in Canada, Ulsifer explained how his practice met with nine other practices in western Canada in June 2006 to discuss independent optometry and to "talk about a new technology called free-form." The practices seized the "unique opportunity to consolidate" and merged the practices to become one company known as FYidoctors. He described it as a unique business model that lent itself to easy growth.

In addition to merging the practices, FYidoctors also invested in its own free-form optical lab as well as a warehouse to facilitate national distribution. Future plans for FYidoctors include launching a business-to-consumer website. FYidoctors now consists of 102 locations, 250 ODs, and 1,200 employees, and it generated \$137 million in revenue in 2011. Even with this dramatic growth, "the doctors still call the shots," said Ulsifer.

Hollis followed with a description of how Doctors Vision Center has achieved and maintains the success that has grown the chain to 43 offices in



*The panel on Maintaining an Innovative Edge in Vision Care with (l to r) FYidoctors' Alan Ulsifer, OD, Doctors Vision Center's William "Buzz" Hollis and Shopko's Don Bye.*

North Carolina and Virginia. He listed the challenges and market factors affecting the optical business today. The challenges include "fear of being commoditized, sustaining profitable growth, leveraging both medical and optical, and how to measure and manage," while some of today's market factors are "the pace of technology and access to information,

communication channels, patient expectations, reimbursement and regulations, and the fact that change is constantly constant."

Yet, "we see every challenge as a new opportunity," he said, and described how he used social media to promote two trunk shows in North Carolina that earned \$33,000 net and \$41,000 net respectively. "That's incremental income to



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us,” he said, explaining, “We’re not a buying group; we’re a selling group. We want to deal with our preferred vendors.”

Hollis also implored attendees, “You better get digital,” and he cited Doctors Vision Center’s electronic presence on Facebook, Twitter and with online videos. In addition to expanding its social media initiatives and growing web traffic with both paid advertising and organically, Doctors Vision Center is also reinventing its mobile presence, launching the MyDVC smartphone app and creating the Doctors Vision Center Professional Eye Care Network.

Hollis added that the facts of optical practices remain the same today as they have over the years: “The most successful practices are those that are involved in their community.”

Bye of Shopko’s Optical Services concluded this panel discussion. After a brief history of the discount chain store, which started in 1962 at the same time as Walmart and Kmart, Bye explained that in 2012 Shopko is merging with Pamida’s 193 locations. “The challenge this year is to evaluate all Pamidas and decide where it makes sense to add optical,” he said. Because most locations are located in communities with a population of less than 12,000, “when adding optical it’s tricky to find a full-time OD,” he said.

One of the first mass merchants to add optical, Shopko now operates 138 Shopko Eyecare Centers in 12 states, filling more than 500,000 prescriptions annually. The company maintains its own optical laboratory and last year invested \$2 million in free-form and anti-reflective coating equipment.

Bye then echoed Hollis’s sentiment about community involvement with a description of Shopko Project Eyecare, a partnership established with the Salvation Army in 2000 that over the years has provided over \$700,000 worth of eyecare to approximately 6,700 people in need. He described the program as “innovation through service,” stating, “The one thing that does not change is that eyecare providers, no matter how they operate, still live or die by customer service.” ■

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*Alan Ulsifer, OD, CEO, president and chair of FYidoctors, described how his organization grew from a meeting of nine practices in June 2006 to 102 locations today.*



*William “Buzz” Hollis, president and CEO of Doctors Vision Center, explained how he turns challenges into opportunities.*



*Don Bye, VP of Optical Services for Shopko said that he is evaluating where to add optical in the 193 Pamida locations being integrated into this mass merchant.*

## Innovation Moves From Science Fiction to Science Fact

Continued from page S4

be in every computer. It will change the way we interact with everything, including health care.”

She said most e-commerce sites use eye tracking in their design because it reveals whether the viewer did not see certain portions of the site, or whether they saw and ignored it. Retailers are also benefiting from eye tracking, she said. “Eye tracking collects eye data points when people are looking around a store. It can quantify the amount of time you’ve looked at something so you can see how people are shopping. “Our eyes reveal when we are thinking and reading,” Barclay noted. “They reveal the impact of a store or site design.”

Jim Little, vice president of R&D, Second Sight, described the company’s development of the Argus II Retinal Prosthesis System, which restores vision for people blinded by outer retinal degenerations.

He said about 40 patients throughout the world have had the implant, and most have reported positive results. Little played videos that showed some of these patients navigating down a street by walking on painted lines.

“We have been able to restore some sight to people. It’s not beautiful vision, but it’s a place to start,” he remarked.

“Most patients get some benefit. We still have to improve the resolution of the image. It’s like in 1985, when the first cochlear implants came on the market. People said it was just an aid to lip



*The audience was fascinated with the products and systems outlined during the panel.*

reading. But now, they’ve improved the implants to the point where patients can distinguish notes on a piano.” ■

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