

June 29, 2009

Essilor and Framesdirect Partners?

Posted by Harry Chilinguerian in Home, June 29, 2009 @2:05 pm

In the past I have heard many rumors mostly in online forums, things like Essilor and Luxottica teaming up. Crazy I know, but lately our industry has seen a twisted and disturbing trend of corporations taking advantage of the independent practitioners. Some of the latest headlines VSP losing their status as a non-profit and then purchasing Marchon to then further squeezing the same profession their non-profit status was supposed to support. 1800contacts partnering up with Walmart to provide exams, because the law doesn't allow them to sell contacts to expired prescriptions they need an avenue to get them in valid prescriptions. To the latest Essilor and Frames Direct partnering to provide eyeglasses online.

This trend has been predicted far before I could ever conceive of it, but here we are. ECP's are at a precipice where a choice needs to be made. Some call to boycott Essilor, but they didn't start this disturbing trend they just see an opportunity to exploit it. The many ethically bankrupt companies that have traded in sustainable growth for fast cash are growing and the mentality to have ECP's join them is alarming. I won't attempt to persuade anyone into boycotting Essilor's products, but I personally won't be using their products or services.

The real problem that needs to be addressed is our professions fractures, until optician, OD and OMD learn to work together large corporations will exploit this weakness. Eyeglasses need to be fitted properly and dispensed by qualified professionals, this cannot be accomplished with online eyewear so our patients are being swindled and now our vendors want in on it.