

# Eyewear Intelligence

News and analysis of the international market

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PUBLICATIONS

## No growth in the European market since 2008

Overall, the total volume of ophthalmic lenses sold in the last four years has not grown at all in the four major European countries, according to **SWW Strategy with Vision (SWV)**. **Mark Mackenzie**, who heads up the international consultancy, predicts that the volume will increase at an average annual rate of one percent through 2017.

On the positive side, SWV has found that the repeat purchase cycle for spectacles increased slightly from 2.7 years in 2008 to 2.9 years in 2012, and Mackenzie feels that it may well stay at that level through 2017. Also, the sale of 1.6-index lenses grew at a compound annual rate of 8 percent between 2008 and 2012, and in the area of anti-reflection coatings, the share taken up by premium coatings has risen significantly.

SWV's annual country reports, which cover the eyewear market in France, Germany, Italy and the U.K., show important variations from one country to the other. For example, they indicate that the economic crisis has affected the U.K. and Italy the most. Mackenzie estimates that the repeat purchase rate will grow to four years in Italy by the end of 2013, but he feels that the worst is over and that it will decline to 3.7 by 2017.

The French and German markets have been growing slowly since 2008, but both of them are likely to suffer a small contraction in 2013, according to SWV's latest research. Mackenzie

is positive about the British market, partly because the local population has been growing there thanks to immigration, but he indicates that the outlook in France will largely depend on the future guidelines for mutual insurance companies (see the related News Brief in this issue).

When it comes to sales of ophthalmic frames in Europe, SWV's reports show that they have suffered since 2008 from the slowdown in lens sales, growth in reglazing and a decline in average selling prices. SWV's forecast for the next four years is that the frame segment will benefit from higher lens sales and a reduction in reglazing levels.

SWV's annual studies of the eyewear market in the four European countries have shown that sales of plano sunglasses suffered from poor weather conditions in 2012, and the problem was repeated in the past spring.

The number of people wearing contact lenses went up between 2008 and 2011, but a slight decline was recorded in 2012. Mackenzie thinks that this was probably due to the economic difficulties facing people aged 16 to 34, who are the main users of this kind of product. The average value of contact lenses has continued to grow due to higher sales of silicone hydrogel, toric disposable and multifocal contact lenses.

The economic crisis has impacted refractive surgery. However, the total estimated value of operations performed in Europe showed a lower level of decline than in the U.S. for the same period. Their value is expected to grow in Europe between 2013 and 2017, thanks

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### Corporate

**Bushnell, Hoya, Specsavers, Vision Express**

### Management & Distribution

**Adlens, Coburn, CVI, Marchon, etc.**

### Results & Statistics

**Allergan, Conad, Fielmann, Bode**

### Other Companies

**Fossil, Google, Ocuco, Okia, Optician, Pearle Vision**

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to economic recovery, the introduction of multifocal intraocular lenses and Phakic intraocular lenses.

At €16.5 billion including VAT, the total value of the optical retail stores' sales in Europe's four major markets in 2012 was 0.6 percent lower than in 2008. SWV has also detected some other interesting trends at the retail level in Europe. For example:

\* Overall, the growth in market share of optical retail chains slowed in 2012 in Europe, due to market share losses in the U.K. and Italy. The total number of retail optical outlets remained stable at a total of approximately 40,600 in the four countries. Possible reasons for the lack of decline are given in SWV's individual country reports.

\* The top ten optical retail organizations in these four countries made up 45 percent of total retail sales of optical products, excluding the internet.

\* Internet sales of spectacles and contact lenses have been estimated by SWV in each of the countries. The penetration rate of internet sales for spectacles varies from 0.25 percent of market value in France to 1 percent in the U.K. For contact lenses and solutions, internet penetration varies from 6 percent in France to 18 percent in Germany.

Every year since 2001, SWV has been taking a high-resolution picture of the French, German, Italian and U.K. market for vision care products. Its annual studies cover sales of spectacle lenses, ophthalmic frames, plano

sunglasses and contact lenses and solutions in each of the four countries.

The research work needed to make these snap-shots possible is carried out at the wholesale and retail levels from February to May each year.

SWV's complete reports, analyzing the situation in 2012, trends since 2008 and forecasts through 2017, can be purchased from **EDM Publications**, publisher of **Eyewear Intelligence**, at a price of €3,150 per country. As a reward for the purchase of one or more country reports, subscribers to EWI will then get a €100 discount on the next invoice for the renewal of their subscriptions. Non-subscribers will receive this newsletter free of charge for six months.

The Euro Aug. 9 rates	
Czech Koruna	25.82
Danish Krone	7.457
Hungarian Forint	297.8
Norwegian Krone	7.909
Polish Zloty	4.190
Pound Sterling	0.860
Swedish Krona	8.681
Swiss Franc	1.231
U.S. Dollar	1.338
Brazilian Real	3.053
Canadian Dollar	1.381
Chinese Yuan	8.198
Japanese Yen	128.9
Russian Ruble	43.93