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A powerful start into the optical year

opti 2025 in Munich once again sent out a strong signal for international ophthalmic optics over the past three days of the trade show. Under the motto #weareopti, the trade show proved how well it functions as a platform for innovation, dialogue, future-oriented technologies and trends and how great the enthusiasm for opti is throughout the industry.

"Best opti ever", "absolutely important", "great sales", "a complete success" and "GHM has kept its promise" – this or similarly enthusiastic was the feedback from exhibiting companies at opti 2025; on the visitor side, the number of 21,105 trade visitors with a decision-maker rate of more than 70 percent spoke for a very successful event.

The positive atmosphere that characterised opti 2025 on all three days of the trade show was the result of intensive cooperation between the opti team, exhibitors and industry representatives, which was driven forward with new ideas throughout last year. The exhibitors' satisfaction speaks for itself: at over 97%, almost all exhibitors rated the visitor quality as good to very good in terms of interest in the products on their stand. At almost 89%, exhibitors also rated the initiation of business relationships at opti as very good to good – no wonder that more than 90 per cent of exhibitors announced that they are planning to be back at opti 2026.

With 330 exhibitors from 23 countries, including 190 registrations from Germany, opti showcased the entire value chain of the optical industry: the spectrum ranged from frame manufacturers to suppliers of contact lenses and spectacle lenses, leading brands and innovative, independent designers through to consulting firms, IT consultancies, equipment and lens manufacturers as well as shopfitting companies and hearing acoustics.

Cathleen Kabashi, Head of opti, on the trade show: "opti remains on course for success! After opti 2024, we went one better and it paid off. Combining our information HUBs in the opti HUB ARENA and the joint platform for contact lens manufacturers, TOMORROW VISION, met with a very good response from visitors and exhibitors alike. And confirmed to us that both the concept and opti as an annual kick-off are a success. The latter is based on the close cooperation with our stakeholders and the strong community – it is the sense of community that makes opti what it is!"

"I am simply overwhelmed! The atmosphere was impressive and the enthusiasm of the industry was clearly noticeable. The visitors enjoyed the trade show to the full. I was particularly pleased that contact lenses were shown from a different perspective and really shone in the spotlight with

TOMORROW VISION and many expert presentations. It is creative ideas like these that will definitely make opti a permanent fixture for the markets in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and beyond, and further establish it as an important source of inspiration for product range strategies and annual planning," sums up Dieter Dohr, CEO and President of GHM Gesellschaft für Handwerksmessen mbH, the organiser of opti.

Highlights as far as the eye could see

The biggest innovation and thus the highlight of the trade show was clearly TOMORROW VISION, the joint contact lens platform of the nine renowned manufacturers Alcon, Bausch + Lomb, CooperVision, Hecht, Hetych, Menicon, MPG&E, SwissLens and Wöhlk. Under the slogan "Contact lenses are the future of ophthalmic optics", visitors experienced a comprehensive programme with a maximum focus on the advantages of lenses and their great sales potential in the 170 m² joint area.

Another opti highlight was the opti HUB ARENA, in which four info HUBs were concentrated for the first time, in addition to the established opti SUSTAINABILITY HUB and the opti MYOPIA HUB, as well as the opti FUTURE VISION HUB with current trends in ophthalmic optics, including in the frames segment of the trade show. Among other things, the presentations and discussions on the Eyewear Trends 2026 by New York trend expert and founder Selin Olmsted were very popular. The trend tours she led were already fully booked at the beginning of January. No wonder: the earlier the trends are known in the industry and can be used for ordering, the better the chances of being fit for the future.

Right next door: the opti NEXT GENERATION HUB, with which opti, in close cooperation with representatives of the VDCO Young for the young talent in the industry. Speed dating formats such as NextGen Meet-up were on offer here, where youngsters from the optical industry could exchange experiences with each other, for example on further and advanced training opportunities or the Meet & Match format - young talent meets companies.

Awards and opti PARTY

The opti FRAME STAR – The Audience Award was presented for the first time, in which opti visitors voted for their favourite frame among 50 frames using a QR code. We congratulate the lucky winner Munic Eyewear from Munich. The 5th opti BOX AWARD was won by the Berlin start-up Manti Manti for its children's eyewear design, as announced by the international jury headed by Daniel Feldman from The Optical Journal. Congratulations! The opti PARTY on Friday had already established itself as a must-attend event this year. Here, all trade show participants celebrated the first successful day with cool beats and drinks.

Make a note now: the next opti will take place in Munich from 16 January to 18 January 2026.

Statements from selected trade show participants:

Christian Müller, President of the Central Association of Opticians and Optometrists (ZVA):

"Once again this year, opti played a key role in bringing the industry together and providing important impetus. At our opti CAFÉ powered by ZVA, the rush for the popular poffertjes was great and the ZVA was, as usual, a contact point for discussions and information on topics that are currently of interest to opticians. Every year, the encounters at the stand provide us with valuable insights into the current needs and wishes of the industry."

Mirjam Rösch, Chair of Consumer Optics, industry association SPECTARIS:

"In my opinion, opti was a complete success. GHM has kept its promise and exciting new formats have emerged. We received consistently positive feedback from our customers. Hall 4 in particular was very busy and we received a lot of positive feedback from the industry - both from the glass industry and from smaller companies. The appliance sector in particular is experiencing a slight upturn, as customers are showing more willingness to invest again. Also the general feedback from industry partners confirms this: Munich and opti are the place to be. We want to continue to invest and see opti as an important communication platform for our customers."

Christoph Hinnenberg, Managing Director of Carl Zeiss Vision GmbH:

"Once again, we had an excellent cooperation with opti and a great stand. My team was highly motivated, we achieved great sales and say: best opti ever for Zeiss!"

Markus Schuldt, B.Sc. Optometry:

"We are super happy the opti team involved the VDCO Young in the design of the opti NEXT GENERATION HUB. The consistently positive feedback motivates us to continue on this path of joint dialogue. In addition, opti was the ideal place for VDCO Young to promote dialogue and make new contacts. Thanks to Cathleen Kabashi and Julia Hofmann for their great support!"

Andrea Mazzo, General Manager EssilorLuxottica Wholesale Germany:

"This year's opti is once again extremely interesting – both for EssilorLuxottica and for the industry as a whole. This is where we meet our partners and at the same time make new contacts for future collaboration. No question – there are other trade fairs in Europe, such as MIDO or SILMO, but opti is absolutely important for us as a national trade show focussing on the DACH region. And we also reach an international market here.

We are particularly pleased that our experts at the opti MYOPIA HUB will be able to present trade visitors with Essilor Stellest, an evidence-based solution and opportunity to actively counteract the development of myopia in children and adolescents.

We presented exciting innovations in the EssilorLuxottica area and experienced a large number of visitors from the very first minute. We personally invited opticians, and they accepted the invitation to discover our innovation Nuance Audio – the world's first hearing aid glasses – which is celebrating its premiere here at opti and will also be available in Germany from the middle of this year. Another innovation at the trade show is AI functions, which will be available from the second quarter for Ray-Ban Meta will be unlocked. We can also tease a very special anniversary here: 50 years of Oakley.

For us, opti was a complete success and we are very satisfied with this special trade show and the great response to our innovations."

Thomas Smits, Managing Director Silhouette Germany and Switzerland:

"opti 2025 was a successful event for us and a good start to the new year. We had many constructive discussions, further strengthened existing customer relationships and made valuable new contacts. Our expectations in terms of sales were met. The positive atmosphere at the trade show and the great interest in innovative solutions show us that the industry is on a promising path. We are optimistic about the future - both for our company and the industry as well as for opti as the central platform for ophthalmic optics."

Jan Thore Föhrenbach, Cluster Franchise Head Vision Care DACH:

"We are back for the first time in 5 years, which makes me personally very happy because I am a big fan of the trade show. The overall impression is very positive: As expected, Friday took a little while to get going, but on Saturday and Sunday the stand was full, the frequency was very good and we had many customer contacts and good discussions.

What inspires me personally is the joint action of the contact lens manufacturers, which we have supported from the very beginning. In my opinion, the idea of developing the market together - motivating opticians to fit contact lenses and thus increase penetration and not just increase their own slice of the cake, but the cake as a whole - is the right approach. This idea, which was born out of the SPECTARIS contact lens circle and then driven forward by GHM, especially Cathleen Kabashi personally, is a good example of how co-operation between contact lens manufacturers can work. In my view, the collaboration was very co-operative and in a certain sense based on solidarity. And I believe that we have found a good concept. Now we are excited and waiting to see what the results of the shared space will be, basically a positive impression from our side."

Kontakte

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