



Calculating Transaction Costs

P2



Partnership Helps Doctor Focus on the Future

P3



PSBG Vendor News

P4

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SPECIAL ABB-CONCISE ISSUE

Preferred Select Buying Group

NEWS

Practice Advanced Efficiency with ABB CONCISE Tools & Support

Preferred Select Buying Group is proud to announce its partnership with ABB CONCISE. This partnership allows its members to receive all of the benefits ABB CONCISE has to offer AND consolidate their monthly statements by billing their ABB CONCISE purchases through PSBG.

So long, mail room duties! When **Penn Moody, OD**, began promoting direct-to-patient delivery of contact lenses, staff morale at his Indianapolis, Ind., practice soared. As it turned out, "I learned that they hate checking in and unpacking orders, putting boxes in trays, calling patients, dispensing and collecting balances," he says. "It's just busy work and makes them feel like they work in a mail room. None of them got into the optical business to work in a mail room."

He expected the switch would result in greater efficiency, but he was delighted to find it also improved the mood of the staff.

However, as happens with many new initiatives, old habits began sneaking back in. "We were starting to slip and order a few more lenses into the office. People asked, 'Can't you do this for me?' And the staff complied."

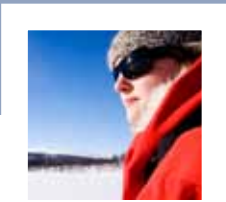
Then Dr. Moody read an article in which ABB CONCISE CEO **Angel Alvarez** discussed transaction costs of contact lens orders. Soon after, a friend, a CooperVision executive, introduced him to Alvarez, knowing both were devotees of *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business Is Selling Less of More*. "It changed the whole way I do business," says Dr. Moody. "I started looking at transaction costs for

everything we do, not just ordering contact lenses."

The first action he took was to consolidate all contact lens orders with ABB CONCISE; he had been using another distributor for some of his contact lens orders. Then in the fall, he announced at a staff meeting that the practice would no longer accept in-office delivery for any contact lenses except trials and GP lenses. Contact lens technicians were worried and said he should be prepared to see patients walk out with prescriptions if they weren't offered the convenience of picking up their orders in the office. He was unmoved and said he'd cross that bridge if they came to it.

They didn't. In fact in the first two months, direct-to-patient delivery jumped from below 70 percent to 81 percent.

Continued on page 2...



Continued from page 1...

The office stocks a healthy soft contact lens inventory, so the trial orders delivered to the office may skew his numbers downward, he says. "Maybe one or two patients a month insist that they pick up their lenses here." To accommodate those patients who want lenses delivered to the office, or those whose insurance requires that the office orders the lenses, there's a two-tiered pricing system. "If we handle the order, the patient doesn't receive the online discount."

Dr. Moody acknowledges he put his staff through a lot of changes at once: a new ordering site for contact lens orders, a mandate to promote direct-to-patient shipping and a strong recommendation for annual supplies. None were unfamiliar concepts to the staff, but he had a newfound determination to increase efficiency and reduce transaction costs. It has been an effective step. Dr. Moody says revenues are up 24 percent—and he's hired a part-time employee, additionally freeing up time for his busy staff. "I would have had to hire a full-time person if it weren't for the efficiencies we gained," he says.

ABB CONCISE has helped with every step, he says.

- **Yourlens.com:** "I've taken the stance that patients are online anyway. I have to be there, too," he says. One of the reasons he moved his business to ABB CONCISE was the turnkey yourlens.com. He hired his high school-aged daughter to key in patient information, speeding up the conversion to online ordering.
- **Annual supplies:** If patients order four or fewer boxes of contact lenses, there's a \$7.50 delivery charge. It's not a huge amount, but it's enough to make patients re-evaluate the annual supply—with free, convenient delivery to their home or office.
- **Front-desk freedom:** When patients call to reorder contact lenses, the receptionist directs them to the yourlens.com link on the practice web site. Phone lines aren't tied up with taking orders, meaning patients who call with questions or to schedule an appointment get through faster or aren't put on hold.

Remembering to steer patients to the web site requires a change in habit. He and staff members sometimes catch themselves starting to order contact lenses for patients. But with each passing week, there are fewer lapses. That's where Dr. Moody's resolve as the practice leader comes in. "In my opinion, a leader establishes the vision and then sells it for the practice. That means I keep encouraging the staff, I check on the progress of our initiatives and I compliment and support the staff for doing them well."

So he takes the lead in introducing online contact lens ordering to patients. He tells the patient in the chair that other patients love this option for the convenience and the savings. If he waited for the contact

lens technicians or front office staff to make the presentation, it might sound to the patient that this option is more convenient to the staff. When Dr. Moody introduces it as faster and quicker for patients, then it's much easier for the staff to follow through.

Every Friday, doctor and staff meet for 45 minutes to an hour. "We also hold impromptu meetings during the week if an issue pops up," he says. Dr. Moody says these meetings are valuable to everyone. The staff members bring ideas and suggestions, and Dr. Moody provides them latitude to solve problems while accomplishing the practice's three written goals: provide an exceptional experience for the patient, provide an exceptional place to work and make money.

Now that ABB CONCISE rep **Abel Brown** brings quarterly business reviews, there's new information to share with the staff. "No one has ever done that for me before," Dr. Moody says of the review that shows graphically what the business is doing and where it falls in comparison to top accounts. These consultations have helped him begin to formulate additional plans for the practice, such as bringing in an in-office lab and ordering ophthalmic lenses through ABB CONCISE.

He was pleased to find that he compared well on those progressive strategies that are important to him: online orders, direct-to-patient deliveries and daily disposable lens sales. It confirmed to him what he thought when he first met Alvarez—that their businesses have similar views in how the marketplace is evolving. With ABB CONCISE, he feels he can adapt to those market shifts more easily—and with more support than he's ever had before.

TRANSACTION COSTS: Staff time is money; efficiency saves

Each individual contact lens order consumes an average of 28 minutes of administrative time, at a cost of \$7. Multiplied by the number of suppliers, that cuts into profits and staff time. Total consolidation of purchasing reduces administrative costs by \$4.07 per order. For a typical account, the annual savings is more than \$4,000 compared to placing individual orders.

Calculate your potential gain:

Take your hourly employee rate, divide by 2 (equals about 28 minutes). This will give you the administrative dollars spent on each contact lens order. Multiply the cost per order by the number of contact lens orders placed each month to calculate the potential monthly savings. Multiply this monthly savings by 12 months to get the potential annual gain.

\$ _____ / 2 = _____ x _____ = _____ x 12 = \$ _____



Partnership Helps Doctor Focus on the Future

Mary Boname, OD, wants her Montgomery Eye Care in Montgomery Township, N.J., to evoke the feeling of an old-time community doctor's office—with the high-tech efficiency of a progressive practice. The atmosphere in the small shopping center evokes Norman Rockwell and the community's history. Scouts set up tables to sell cookies, popcorn and Christmas wreaths. Her business neighbors include a movie theater, a grocery store, a drug store, a candy shop and a barber. "It's real, small-town America at its best," she says. But inside the practice, the technology and instrumentation are the latest available.

Dr. Boname has found a partner in her effort to stay on the cutting edge of progress: ABB CONCISE. Over the past seven years, her growth has been supported—even spurred on—by the new tools and programs that ABB CONCISE has delivered. "ABB CONCISE is a terrific company, providing independent doctors the tools we need to be competitive. Every time my rep Shelley Farley tells me I need to get on board with something like online contact lens orders for patients, I embrace it fully," Dr. Boname says.

She has come to trust the consulting services as much as she relies on the efficient distribution. Each time she incorporates advice or services from ABB CONCISE, managing her practice becomes a little easier. That, in turn, allows her to focus on patient care and build loyalty.

Born of Necessity

Dr. Boname first began to consider working with a soft contact lens distributor for an obvious reason: working with each contact lens manufacturer, paying multiple shipping charges and handling several invoices each month was an administrative hassle. Her CIBA VISION representative suggested ABB CONCISE. She hoped the arrangement would save her time and some money. It has done that and much more. Farley's quarterly business reviews, for example, provide her insight into the big picture of what's working well in her office. Doctors can glean this information on their own, but it's a lot more work. And through their regular discussions, Dr. Boname can learn from Farley what other practitioners are doing and use ABB CONCISE Top 500 data as benchmarks to set her own goals.

Online Conversion

One of the greatest benefits Dr. Boname has found with ABB CONCISE is that the company has made it so easy for her to keep up with the online marketplace. She and her staff appreciate being able to place their orders into the shopping basket and reorder with the click of a button. And when ABB CONCISE launched yourlens.com, it brought the practice to a new level of efficiency. In fact, 90 percent of her soft contact lens

wearers are ordering their contacts through yourlens.com.

"At 1,567 square feet, we don't have the supply space for a big inventory," Dr. Boname says. The shift to keeping a virtual inventory at ABB CONCISE distribution headquarters solved many problems. She can maintain a supply of trial lenses, and ABB CONCISE ships contact lenses directly to patients. It's quick, easy and efficient. In this town near Princeton, "even my patients in their 80s and 90s use a computer," she says. If patients prefer, the receptionist—who demonstrates how yourlens.com works—can place an order for any patient.

The yourlens.com system provides her with the level of control she seeks over expiring contact lens prescriptions and the ability to send e-mail reminders to patients to reorder contact lenses or come in for a visit. As a result, it's become a patient education tool as well as a conduit to orders.

Dr. Boname says that Internet-based ordering is so common, there's no downside. "Patients don't need to see a stockroom. Online orders fit better with our overall embracing of technology," she says. In fact, as she has gained space that used to be dedicated to products, Dr. Boname has been able to add more instrumentation. She now has a computerized refracting lane with the Marco 5100, she uses an electronic medical records system and is implementing the e-prescribing module. "Most of my new patients have never had an exam like this," she says. "I like to be ahead of the curve. I'm a leader, not a follower."

Stay Current or Bust

Dr. Boname believes that patients who have been to a technologically advanced practice like hers will be wary of those offices that aren't updated. For example, if patients who are relocating ask for a non urgent referral to another practitioner, she turns to the web. She'll look for doctor's web sites—and the quality and capabilities of that site tell her a lot about that doctor.

"You don't want a web site to be stale," she says. In fact, Dr. Boname recently redesigned her web site to be more interactive. She revealed the new site with a launch party in January, to which she invited long-term patients. She's also adding a Facebook page, which she'll update with short announcements of new contact lenses, products or services or lectures that she's giving.

This new way to promote her practice will help her build on patient loyalty even more, she says. "Health care is a service-based entity. You need to build relationships." That's true of the doctor-patient relationship—and it's true of her partnership with ABB CONCISE.

VENDOR NEWS

Changing seasons... Changing soft contact lens supplier...

By now some of you have noticed that we have changed suppliers for our soft contact lens portion of PSBG.

ABB CONCISE is our new supplier of soft contact lenses. If you currently are signed up to order contact lenses through the buying group, you should have received a letter from us, as well as one from ABB CONCISE, explaining the new partnership. ABB CONCISE has a very extensive online ordering menu for ease of placing your orders online. You can phone or fax your orders into ABB CONCISE as well.

Now that we have an extensive online ordering menu, don't you think it's time to get on board and add soft contact lenses to your PSBG account?

Call us today at **651.556.8140** and we will send you the necessary paper work.

**Place your soft contact lens orders 24/7
through ABB CONCISE.**

www.ABBconcise.com

p: 1.800.852.8089 f: 1.800.851.2470

When placing your orders, use your PSBG account number with a PS in front of the number. i.e. PS614000

t: 800.890.7231 ■ f: 800.838.2972 ■ www.oseyes.com/preferred



**All of us here at PSBG wish
you a very safe and
happy holiday season.**

