



Vision Source® TRUSTED COLLEAGUE

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Vision Source® Membership from the Start Accelerates Practice Growth

Curtis Dechant, OD, and his wife, Amy Fuhr-Dechant, OD, became Vision Source® members as soon as they opened Family Vision Source® in Tucson, Ariz., in 2004. They started in a little strip mall space of 1,400 square feet and outgrew it within 5 years. Before the practice was 6 years old, the couple had moved it to a 3,500-square-foot building – one that they're feeling close to outgrowing now. "We've grown faster than we thought possible – and Vision Source® has been a factor in that," Dr. Dechant says.



Dr. Dechant recalls talking to a doctor he was working for who happened to be friends with a Vision Source® administrator. He mentioned that startup practices could leverage their Vision Source® membership to a tremendous degree, allowing new doctors to make their dollars go further with Vision Source®-negotiated pricing.

But the savings aren't just for new practices. The doctors continue making investments in the practice. They recently acquired the OPD Scan from Marco to speed up refraction time. At the 2013 Exchange in Las Vegas, they outfitted their fifth exam lane. Now, 3 of the 5 exam lanes have automated refracting systems, while the other 2 have older-model dial phoropters. The exam lanes that have not yet been upgraded are used for contact lens checks or by the medical doctor who works in the office once a week.

The couple hired an associate, Jeffrey Horst, OD; 2 ODs work at the same time, keeping the 5 exam lanes busy. "We don't slam the schedule. My exam slots are 20 minutes; theirs are 30 minutes. That allows us the time to do comprehensive exams and still have checks in between," he says.

And the practice continues to grow. "About one-third of our patients are new and two-thirds are returning patients," he says. To keep that growth going, the doctors regularly assess their participation on managed vision care and insurance panels and review their office technology. They have brought in equipment – such as Optos and Marco – to improve efficiency and expand their clinical services; they have added Websystem3 to keep in contact with their patients; they have brought in unique frame lines that make their dispensary a popular destination; and they've expanded their specialty contact lens fittings and corneal refractive therapy cases.

They have also taken advantage of the know-how from their Vision Source® colleagues. "The practice management skills you learn as part of the Vision Source® network is so important. I've gone to all of the national meetings, and I'm always learning tidbits from others," Dr. Dechant says.