

Silhouette Vision Sensation™

Seeing without boundaries with frame and lenses from a single source

Since 1964, Silhouette has stood for stylish, premium frames. Now the brand went one step further: ophthalmic lenses custom-made for its frames. Lenses optimised for seeing without boundaries. Made in Austria, each piece is tailor-made for the individual. Silhouette frames and lenses now form the special whole; creating, the sensation of a perfected visual experience. Silhouette Vision Sensation™.

With **Silhouette Vision Sensation**, Silhouette International, the world's leading supplier in the premium spectacles market, is expanding its concept of the best possible vision even further, setting a new milestone for the company. The optical lenses are produced at the Austrian family company's headquarters in Linz to the highest technical specifications and tailor-made for the Silhouette spectacles collections. This means that their functionality is perfectly attuned to the Silhouette eyewear model, the needs of Silhouette customers and requirements of the partner opticians. The premium lenses – Silhouette Panorama – include single-vision and premium progressive lenses for rimless and full-rimmed spectacles, with a focus on progressive lenses and optimising vision right to the very edge of the lens.

We invited CEO Jan Rosenberg, CFO/COO Thomas Windischbauer and Marcus Wecht, Head of Business Unit Lenses, of Silhouette International, to an interview.

Silhouette has been producing top-quality frames in the premium segment for more than 50 years. Why has the company now decided to produce lenses as well?

Jan Rosenberg:

Silhouette is well-known for its bold business decisions, its commitment to continuous innovation and the resulting “seeing without boundaries” experiences. A perfect marriage of frame and lens is vital for this. For more than 50 years, the optical integrity of our frames – in other words, the stable middle section – has been a prerequisite in all new designs. This has allowed us, as purely a manufacturer of frames, to help to improve the optical visual experience of our customers. With **Silhouette Vision Sensation**, we can now guarantee this optical integrity 100%. Usually, the lens suppliers do not know the design parameters of the frame. Conversely, the frame supplier does not know the parameters of the lens supplier. By producing our own lenses, we know both and are therefore in a position to produce perfectly tailor-made spectacles for our partner opticians' customers. And with perfectly harmonised frames and lenses, the customers don't just see better, they look better as well.

There are already many well-established producers of lenses – how will Silhouette set itself apart from them?

Thomas Windischbauer:

The great advantage of our products is their perfect harmony. Frames and lenses are developed, produced and put together under the same roof in Linz – from the first step to the last. This allows the two components to be perfectly adjusted to each other, which is unique in this form. The result is a complete individual visual experience from a single source and an optimised field of vision right up to the edge of the lens.

What products does Silhouette Vision Sensation include?

Jan Rosenberg:

In our new Lens Lab at Silhouette International's headquarters in Linz, single-vision and progressive lenses for rimless and full-rimmed spectacles are produced under the name **Silhouette Panorama**. The emphasis is on progressive lenses for rimless spectacles and optimising vision right to the very edge of the lens. When **Silhouette Vision Sensation** launches, we will offer a standard range of transparent optical lenses and lightly tinted versions in Brown, Granite, Mint, Blue and Rosé. These are available in 10% or 20% tint or with a colour progression.

With many years of experience, Silhouette is known for top-quality frames. How will you guarantee the premium quality of your Panorama progressive lenses?

Thomas Windischbauer

Together with Prof. Dr. Peter Baumbach, one of the leading capacities in the development of individual and personalized spectacle lenses and a professor at the Aalen University of Applied Sciences, we have developed the progressive lenses - **Silhouette Panorama**. Prof. Baumbach mathematically defined the optimum progressive fields of vision for us, on the basis of which we calculate so-called lens design. Working with the Schneider company, a leading player in the machine technology sector, the machines were precisely tailored to our individual requirements for production using free-form technology. Im Sinne der Nachhaltigkeit ermöglicht uns das Silhouette Lens Lab am Standort Linz darüber hinaus kurze Wege zwischen den Abteilungen, enge Verzahnung mit unserer eigenen Forschung & Entwicklung und gleichbleibende Qualität durch laufende Prüfung.

Where does the innovation come into the Silhouette Panorama progressive lenses and what advantages do they offer your customers?

Marcus Wecht:

We pay particular attention to the area at the edge of the lenses and the related limitless vision. We don't want to restrict ourselves by focusing on progressive lenses that are optimised for either long-sightedness or short-sightedness, like everybody else does. Because we know exactly what lens shape the optician's customer has chosen for their glasses, we can calculate the parameters right up to the very edge of the finished lens shapes using the individual real data of the customers, thereby reducing blur to a minimum. The result is fewer imaging defects and edge distortions or unwanted sway.

As well as the lens innovations you have described above, are there any other factors as to why opticians should choose Silhouette complete glasses in the future?

Marcus Wecht:

Another decisive factor is the way the base curve has been taken into consideration. At Silhouette, frame and lens are built on the same base curve. This sets us apart from the conventional process, whereby the base curves selected by the frame manufacturer and lens producer are defined on the basis of different parameters and are therefore not the same. The consequences of this are well known: customers don't get the aesthetics they were expecting on the basis of the demo glasses and the positioning of the lenses in front of the eyes, and therefore the wearer's vision, are no longer correct. With **Silhouette Vision Sensation**, these consequences are a thing of the past.

Which base curve are the Silhouette designs built on?

Marcus Wecht:

For aesthetic reasons, Silhouette frames are built on Silhouette specific base curve. In our experience, this base curve allows spectacles to fit the wearer's face shape perfectly, as it corresponds to the natural flow of the face. We use this credo in designing our spectacles and also in producing lenses. This means that we can ensure the best possible harmony between frame and lens and optimum compatibility whilst ensuring that spectacles sit perfectly and the individual image points are preserved. The measurements taken by the optician using the demo spectacles are 100% identical to the finished spectacles, meaning that there is no longer any requirement for a subsequent adjustment of the glasses by bending and the glasses look exactly the same as the model which the wearer tried on.

First-time users and those who have switched often struggle to get used to progressive spectacles. How hard is it to get used to your Panorama progressive lenses?

Marcus Wecht:

We keep the distance area of the lenses as large as possible. For first-time users, it will of course be very different from how they are used to seeing, other than for distance – but we try to keep these differences as small as possible. Thanks to the optical features of **Silhouette Panorama** progressive lenses, even people putting them on for the first time will very quickly forget the different eyesight ranges and see clearly and naturally.

Wearers of progressive spectacles don't just want to see better, they want to look better as well. How have you met this requirement?

Marcus Wecht:

Our work focuses on perfectly adjusting the spectacles to the face of the wearer, thereby perfectly shaping both eyesight and appearance. The lenses are optically adjusted to the base curve of the frame. The highly transparent lens material and the special anti-reflection coating also ensure the greatest possible clarity of the lenses and complete the clear lines of the lens harmoniously. We keep the coloured reflection that results from the layer structure and refraction at the edge of the lenses to a minimum. In line with the basic rules of cosmetics, we opted for a soft, cosmetic green tone – green is known to mask unwanted redness and conserve the natural expression of the wearer.

Additionally, the optimised edging of the facet contributes to the unique aesthetics and very special visual comfort of the complete spectacles. Thanks to an edging process developed by us, we create a semi-matt facet, which minimises light reflection and distracting refraction at the edge of the lens.

At Silhouette, we also optimally balance out the differences in lens thickness created by the different values above and below, using specific calculations. In order to achieve a harmonious overall look, Silhouette has paid particular attention to the special balance of lens strength and weight in Vision Sensation.

What services does Silhouette use to support its partner opticians using Vision Sensation?

Jan Rosenberg:

Naturally, **Silhouette Vision Sensation** also lays the greatest possible emphasis on the high levels of service our partners have come to expect from us. The complete spectacles have a number of benefits to opticians: ordering takes less time, as they have just one point of contact for both frame and lens. They also save time, trouble, staff, and therefore money, as the lenses no longer need to be fitted in the optician's own workshop. The breakage risk, particularly with glazing for rimless spectacles, is removed altogether. The time saved in the workshop is freed up for dealing with customers.

We also support opticians with a very special service tool – the **Silhouette Vision Sensation app**. This allows consultation and ordering, which used to be separate stages, to be carried out more quickly and easily. It also enables an extraordinary individual consultation experience, for instance allowing the customer to see how thick the lens in his or her particular prescription will be, even before buying. Using the app, you can choose from more than 400 different lens shapes. The **Vision Sensation app** automatically calculates the individual parameters of the individual customer and adapts fitting heights, for instance.

How does order processing work with Silhouette Vision Sensation and how reliable is it?

Thomas Windischbauer:

To the opticians, **Silhouette Vision Sensation** means having a knowledgeable point of contact for frame and lens. Our lenses are produced in our new Lens Lab in Linz and combined with our frames into Silhouette complete spectacles. All stages of the production process are carried out by our hand-picked team of lens experts. We can guarantee delivery within 96 hours anywhere in Europe, in order to offer our opticians the best possible conditions to ensure the satisfaction of their customers.

Silhouette

What began in 1964 with a vision – eyewear as an accessory – has today become the world's leading brand in lightweight quality eyewear: Silhouette. Under this brand, the lightest eyewear in the world is produced in Austria with a great love of detail, crafted mostly by hand in an individualized design using only the best materials and state-of-the-art technologies and exported to 100 countries across the globe. In 1999, Silhouette revolutionized the world of eyewear with Titan Minimal Art weighing just 1.8 grams, with no rims, screws or hinges. Silhouette eyewear has accompanied astronauts into outer space on 35 missions, has traveled around the world with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, and is worn by a number of big names in entertainment, business and politics.