



New Designer Brands, Demographics Driving Increased Sales of OTC Reading Glasses

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Style conscious Baby Boomers and innovative entries from new designer brands are driving an increased demand for OTC reading glasses. Progressive lenses, with no visible line between vision correcting parts of the lens are popular, as are fashionable designer styles.



Image: New brands like *Clive Somers* and their iconic reading glasses and sunglasses readers, appeal to consumers looking for a fashion accessory as much as corrective eye wear.

To view the full collection, visit: www.CliveSomers.com

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OTC reading glasses is the latest category to witness the consumer move to affordable luxury brands as a preference over cheap or luxury brand alternatives. Though there is an obvious value for money motivation behind the trend, demographics also play a big part.

The OTC reading glasses market is predominantly a market comprising men and women 40 years and older, with the largest segment being 55+. As many industries have seen, the 55+ demographic of 2016 is a different sector than it was 20 years ago.

The generation known as the Baby Boomers are more active than previous generations, they travel more and they are also more style conscious than ever before.

These combined factors are represented in increased demand for stylish, yet affordable luxury accessories such as designer reading glasses.

For a generation with more disposable income, cheap OTC readers are considered uncomfortable, hard on the user's eyes and a fashion nightmare.

“You don't need to spend luxury brand money for stylish, quality reading glasses,” says Bill Head, founder of Clive Somers, a relatively new entry to the market with their line of designer reading glasses.

The brand has taken deliberate steps to position their product as a fashion accessory and distance itself from the negative perceptions associated with cheap drugstore readers.

Over the past year there has been a net increase of over 3 million vision correction users, however certain demographics, especially women and Americans over the age of 55, are embracing vision correction to a larger extent now than they were in late 2014, reports Vision Voice, an industry publication for eye care professionals.

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During the 12ME period December 2015, over-the-counter reading glasses had the largest increase in terms of unit sales along with prescription lenses; increasing by 3.7 percent.

In December of 2015, there were 30.9 million adults wearing over-the-counter reading glasses—a net increase of 4.6 million users since December of 2009.

The Vision Voice data is compiled from VisionWatch, the large scale continuous research study conducted by The Vision Council.

Considering more than one sixth of Americans believe that the style of the frame is the most important factor when buying eyeglasses, and it's a good bet the trend in favor of designer readers is set to continue for the foreseeable future.