

# An eye on the future

*International eyewear firm chooses IBM® solution to put customers in clear focus*



For some companies, “vision” is just a buzzword, filed alongside “corporate mission” and “value statements.”

And then there’s Luxottica Group.

Not only does it make vision its business – producing 130,000 eyeglasses daily that are sold in 115 countries through 200,000 sales points – it reflects a mission of protecting the eyes and enhancing the faces of men and women all over the world. In fact, the company prides itself on “creating... not only eyewear, but new trends, new ways of seeing oneself, and, above all, new well-being for everyone.”

By partnering with designer names in the fashion industry and pursuing strategic acquisitions, Luxottica has seen more than 20 percent growth in sales and profitability in recent years.

But sustaining growth and leadership depends on customer service that’s every bit as gilt-edged as Luxottica’s finest eyewear. It means maintaining direct contact with sales points so Luxottica can analyze, understand and meet the market’s requirements in a timely manner, in other words, keeping retail distributors well stocked at all times with the latest products. Through an automated order management system, Luxottica minimizes delivery time and empowers its distributor customers to practice economical, just-in-time inventory management.

However, that efficiency, until recently, did not extend to Luxottica’s 350 sales reps in the U.S. They had to wait for month-end reports to be printed and mailed to them. And they could not get current information on their customers – sales and order histories, current inventories and more – nearly fast enough.

Determined to get a clearer view of their customers, Luxottica U.S. turned to Waterbury, Connecticut based Innovative Information Solutions Inc. (an IBM Premier Business Partner), who supplied them with IBM’s Content Manager OnDemand report archiving solution.

Luxottica reps now get faster access to accurate information, which helps them manage customers more effectively. Not only is the solution resulting in higher productivity and lower overhead in the U.S., it gives the parent company a window on its North American operations.



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## Luxottica Group

### Innovative designs solution that lowers costs, improves accessibility of reports

Luxottica has been an IBM shop since “way back,” according to Gregory Kyro, Manager of Information Systems at Luxottica’s U.S. headquarters in Port Washington, New York. Having relied on IBM S/36™ and S/38™ models in the past, the company currently uses an IBM AS/400® as its main network server. “We chose the IBM AS/400 platform for its known performance, scalability and reliability,” he says.

The IBM server spits out thousands of reports annually. “Printing and shipping those documents was tremendously expensive in terms of money, time and effort,” recalls Mr. Kyro.

### IBM advantage

So confident was Luxottica in IBM that when it went looking for a solution that would reduce costs and get information to the sales reps faster, it went to IBM and Innovative first – and did not, in the end, go any further.

Specifically architected for the IBM @server™ iSeries™ and AS/400, IBM Content Manager OnDemand intercepts print requests for reports on the server, formats the reports for electronic delivery, and stores them on a server where they are instantly available to users of the network – or even remotely over the Internet.

### Smooth implementation

“Getting the solution off the ground was a very smooth process,” Mr. Kyro says. “Innovative Information Solutions was very good, very helpful. They were always available when we needed them. They’re just the resource you need to get a job like this done.”

Besides the OnDemand software running on the AS/400, the solution includes an OnDemand “client” program that sits on employees’ workstations, a dedicated server for storing the electronic versions of the reports that OnDemand generates, and the Host Access features of IBM’s WebSphere® e-business platform.

Employees at Luxottica’s U.S. headquarters, or at any satellite office with a wide area connection to the headquarters local area network (LAN), can use the OnDemand client module to access reports. Remote employees access information over the Internet either by logging on to the server through their virtual private network (VPN) and using the OnDemand client on their workstation, or by using the WebSphere plug-in and viewing the reports in a browser window.

IBM Business Partner:	Innovative Information Solutions
Solutions:	Content Management, Enterprise Backup, High Availability and Disaster Recovery Planning
Territory:	Northeast
Customer Target:	Enterprise and Small and Medium Business

### Faster access to data

Now that the solution is installed, sales reps can see the month-end reports more than a week sooner than they did before. This gives them early, critical information about customer inventory levels, which in turn helps them place orders that more accurately reflect customers’ needs and minimizes costly backorder situations.

Just getting the reports in electronic format has been a huge improvement. Now sales reps can search on keywords rather than thumbing through pages and

pages of printed reports for a piece of information. They can also reorder columns and customize reports in other ways to make it easier for them to extract data.

In an international empire like Luxottica, the benefits of the OnDemand solution run in all directions. With the installation of IBM’s Enterprise Information Portal (EIP), the reports stored in the OnDemand database are now available over the Internet. In the future, corporate managers in Italy may access U.S. reports to give them the up-to-date information they need to make strategic business decisions in real time.

### Quick return on investment

Besides all the improvements in efficiency, the OnDemand system also saved the company a ton of paper.

Mr. Kyro estimates the company was spending “several hundreds of thousands of dollars” a year to print and ship the reports. Virtually eliminating those costs has allowed Luxottica to see a return on its investment in the OnDemand solution in less than a year, he says.

The biggest benefit of the solution, however, may be impossible to calculate, suggests Russ Sackowitz, Innovative Director of Content Management Software. “It’s more of a business benefit,” he says, “knowing that you won’t lose business because you have better reporting now... that you can offer better customer service. Sometimes you can’t measure the impact precisely.”

Be that as it may, Mr. Kyro notes that “Luxottica has achieved all project objectives quickly and without significant disruption of normal business procedures. System responsiveness has been excellent, with little or no downtime and Innovative Information Solutions has been an important factor in our success.”

For additional information on how **Innovative Information Solutions** can help your organization, contact us at **800-343-8121**, or visit our Web site at **www.innovativeis.com**