

# The online eyewear experience

A fresh look at eyewear e-commerce trends

## INTRODUCTION

Our increasingly online world has transformed nearly every aspect of our daily lives

### Shopping is no exception

E-commerce continues to surge across industries, evolving to become more convenient, innovative and personalized based on consumers' unique needs.

24%

of global retail sales will be online by 2028<sup>1</sup>





## TRENDS

# Online shopping across generations

When it comes to online purchasing, every generation has a distinct approach. Millennials and Gen Z lean headfirst into the convenience and variety of e-commerce platforms. Older generations, including Gen X and Baby Boomers, balance their online shopping with more traditional in-store experiences.

## Increasing in popularity

But the generational divide in online shopping preferences continues to narrow. While different generations vary greatly in their shopping approach and preferences, it seems that online shopping is steadily becoming the go-to choice.

GENERATION	PERCENTAGE THAT SHOPS ONLINE <sup>2</sup>	PERCENTAGE THAT MADE THEIR LAST PURCHASE ONLINE <sup>3</sup>
Gen Z <i>born 1997–2012</i>	80%	23%
Millennials <i>born 1981–1996</i>	75%	26%
Generation X <i>born 1965–1980</i>	65%	25%
Baby Boomers <i>born 1946–1964</i>	55%	27%



<sup>2</sup>“Consumer Shopping Trends and Statistics by the Generation: Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, and Boomers;” Porch Group Media; July 2024. <sup>3</sup>“Generational Divide in Online Shopping? Not SO Fast, Says New Report; PYMNTS: pymnts.com; January 22, 2025.

# Online consumer needs are changing

As e-commerce rises in popularity, consumer demands keep evolving. Today's online shoppers expect companies to know their preferences and personalize their experience. Consumers also value an easy checkout process and the ability to quickly compare prices with competitors.<sup>4</sup>

## Searching for selection and savings

When they're browsing online, shoppers love having lots of choices and opportunities to save. In a recent survey, 1,500 U.S. and U.K. consumers were asked the most important qualities they seek in an online retailer:<sup>5</sup>

**59%**  
of people surveyed  
mentioned lower  
prices<sup>5</sup>



**37%**  
mentioned the  
importance of having  
extensive product  
choices<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>"Entrepreneurs, Take Note: 9 Trends in Online Purchasing Habits"; business.com; September 4, 2024.

<sup>5</sup>"2024 Online Retail Trends Report"; Celigo; celigo.com; February 2024.





#### E-COMMERCE EVOLUTION

## The eyewear market's online shift

To adapt to consumer demand, the eyewear industry has also been shifting its focus online. E-commerce has been growing rapidly in the eyewear sector and is projected to be the fastest-growing distribution channel between 2024 and 2032.<sup>6</sup>

### Why go online for eyewear?

There are lots of reasons why consumers may go online for frames instead of a brick-and-mortar store, including:<sup>7</sup>



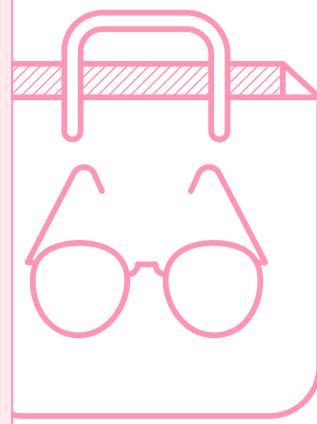
**Convenience**



**Wider selection of styles and brands**



**Opportunity to find lower prices**



### Buying frames in-store is still popular

Despite the significant growth in online shopping, many consumers still prefer to purchase eyewear in person. In fact, in Q1, Q2 and Q3 of 2024, 86% of consumers reported buying their eyewear in person, while only 14% made their purchases online. This marked a slight decrease in online purchasing, which had been holding steady at 16% throughout 2023.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup>"Eyewear Market Size, Share & Segmentation By Product"; SNS Insider; snsinsider.com; February 2025.

<sup>7</sup>"We Found The Best Prescription Glasses Online To Make Shopping Easy"; Forbes; forbes.com; March 6, 2025.

<sup>8</sup>New research from The Vision Council focuses on Q3 consumer trends across optical products and services"; Optometry Times; optometrytimes.com; November 2024.

# In-store and online spending differs

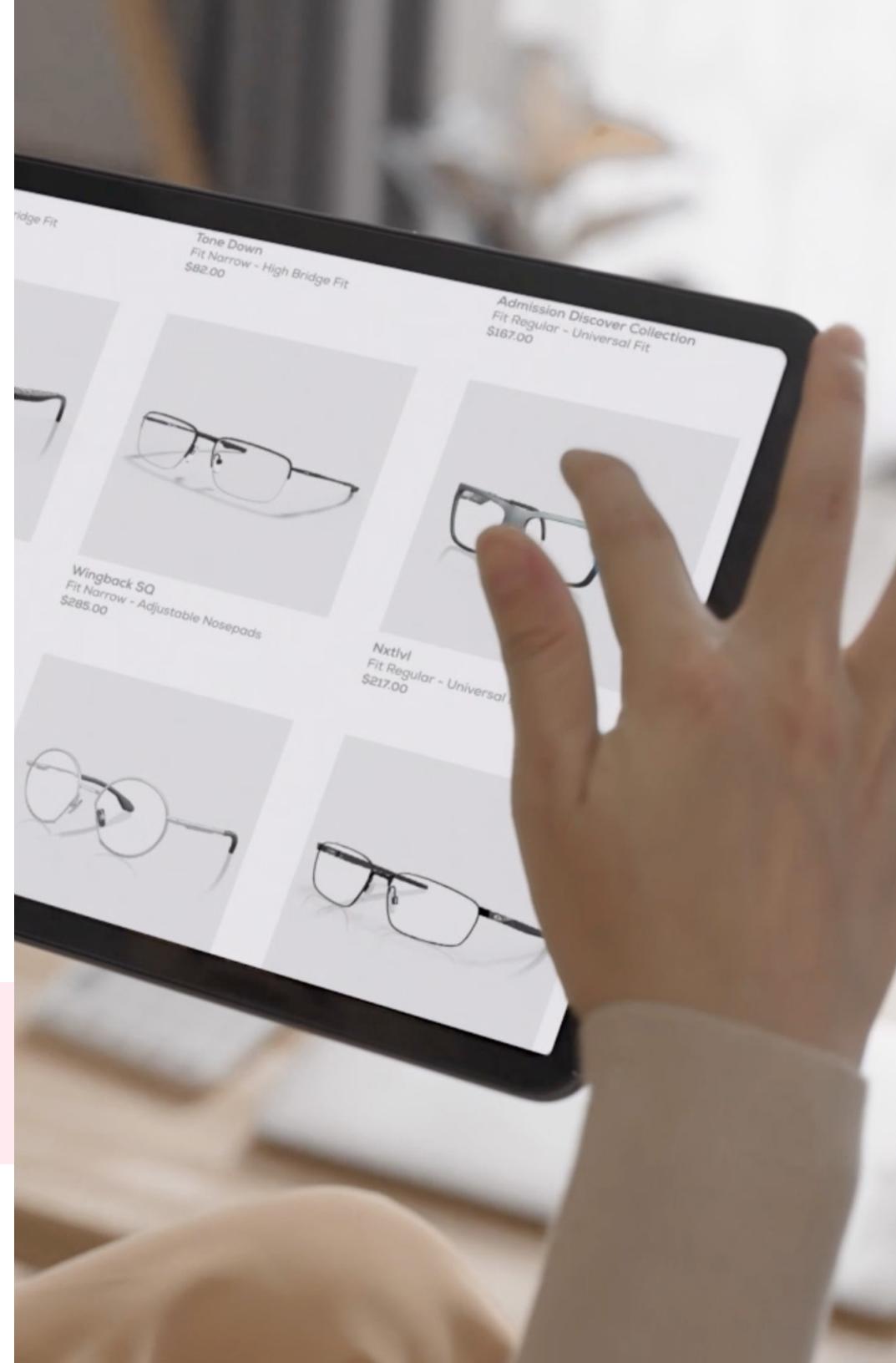
Interestingly, consumer purchasing habits change depending on where they're buying their glasses. Consumers who purchase eyeglasses in person are more likely to use their FSA or HSA benefits and spend more out-of-pocket. Consumers who shop online are more likely to buy multiple pairs of frames and spend more on non-prescription sunglasses.<sup>9</sup>

## Finding ways to meet shoppers' needs

To meet the evolving needs and expectations of consumers, online eyewear providers are finding ways to deliver an enhanced shopping experience. Compared to physical stores, online stores offer a wider selection of frames and brands. With tools and shopping data, many e-commerce platforms are able to offer personalized recommendations based on the user's style and needs.



By offering augmented reality (AR) tools, retailers are allowing consumers to see how frames look on their faces before they purchase<sup>10</sup>



<sup>9</sup>"Majority of Shoppers Continue to Buy Prescription and Non-prescription Optical Products In-Store"; The Vision Council; thevisioncouncil.org; March 12, 2024. <sup>10</sup>"The Role of E-Commerce in the Eyewear Industry: How Brands Are Breaking Traditional Barriers"; International Business Times; ibtimes.co.uk; April 22, 2025.

## MORE FOR MEMBERS

# How EyeMed is powering eyewear e-commerce

Recognizing the increasing trend of online shopping across generations, EyeMed gives members access to America's largest vision network.<sup>11</sup>

## A seamless experience

Beyond offering range of styles and brands, EyeMed's online providers also make it easy for members to find their perfect frames:

**Virtual Try-On** lets members use their device's camera to see what frames would look like on them.

**Frame Advisor** helps members find eyewear that complements their unique facial features and personal style by analyzing aspects such as their face shape, size, and features. Benefits applied in cart instantly with no paperwork or claims to file

**In-store adjustment and pickup** of frames at any of our retail locations means members who prefer in-person shopping can do so with confidence

## Choices for every style and budget

### For wide selection

**LensCrafters.com** offers an extensive collection from some of the world's most recognized brands, including Ray-Ban, Oakley, Gucci, Burberry, and Prada

### For value

For those seeking value-priced options without compromising on style, **TargetOptical.com**, **Glasses.com** and **FramesDirect.com** provide a wide array of affordable frames and lenses

### For iconic styles

**Ray-Ban (Ray-Ban.com)** is renowned for its timeless designs like the Wayfarer and Aviator models. **Oakley (Oakley.com)** is celebrated for its sporty and innovative eyewear solutions that are a favorite among athletes

### For contact lens wearers

**ContactsDirect.com** offers a comprehensive selection of brands and options

## Something for everyone

EyeMed offers 15,000 frame styles in-network

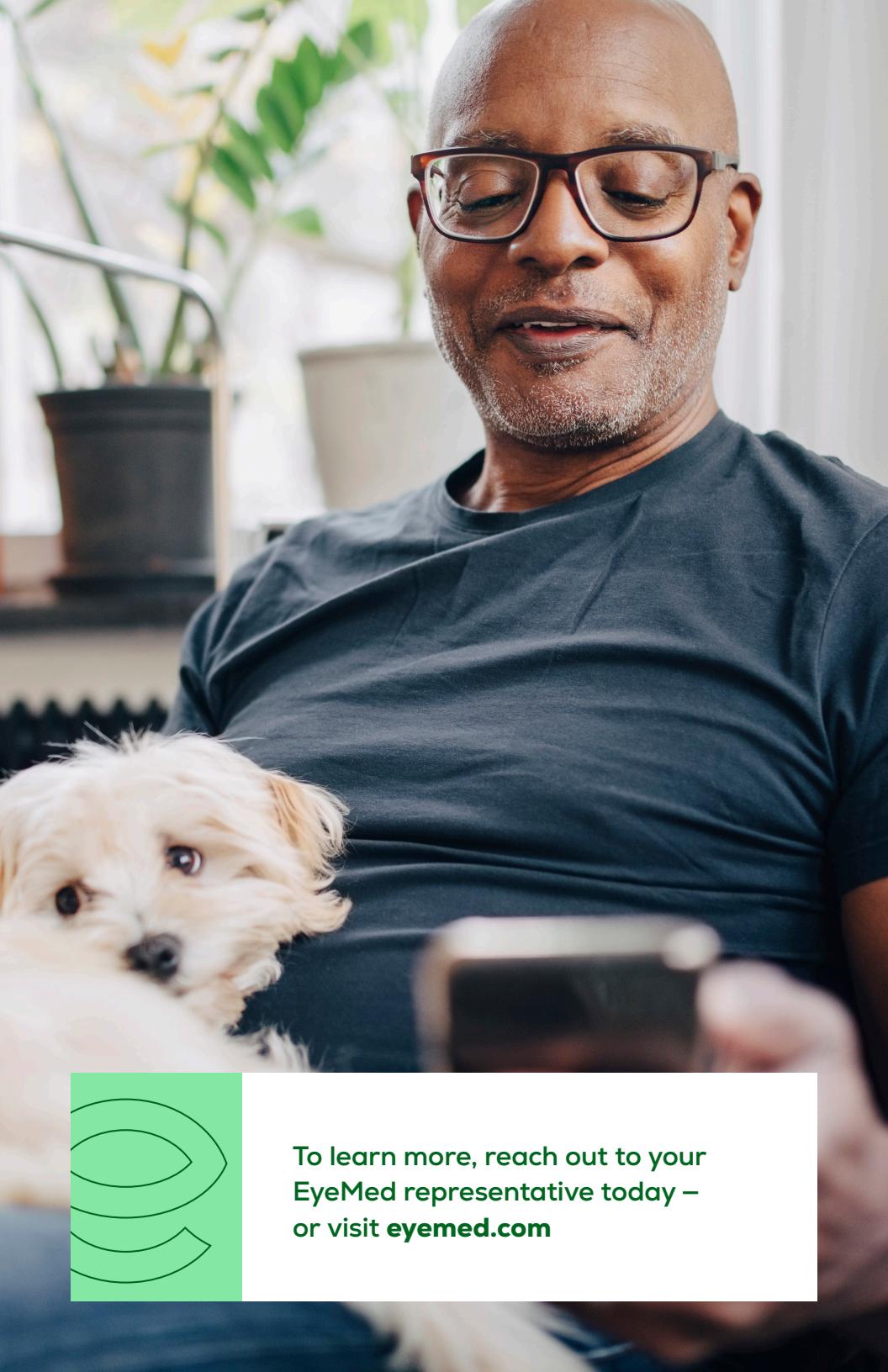




## CONCLUSION

# Committed to meeting members' needs

Online shopping will continue to grow across all generations. And just like other retail industries, the eyewear industry will continue to enhance their e-commerce offerings and adapt to consumers' shopping habits. EyeMed is committed to making it easier for members to browse a variety of frames, use their benefits and save.



To learn more, reach out to your EyeMed representative today – or visit [eyemed.com](http://eyemed.com)