

# Technology Practice of the Year

Award-winning Cameron Beaumont Opticians demonstrated how the latest practice technology can benefit the business and boost levels of clinical care



**T**he Optician Award for Technology Practice of the Year has developed significantly over recent years since optometry is a profession that has seen major advances in the use of technology. Automated field analysers, non-contact tonometers, digital imaging systems (both retinal and anterior), topographers and autorefractors and autokeratometers are now commonplace.

Indeed, whereas several years ago a retinal camera was a luxury item found only in the practices of a well equipped few, now they are increasingly being seen as a necessity, both for clinical and medico-legal reasons.

It is, therefore, not surprising that this category has attracted the greatest number of entries in recent years. It is also the reason why a simple list of practice equipment, no matter how impressive, is no longer sufficient to win over the judges.

Instead, they look for evidence of use, either in case illustrations, patient or other professional testimonials, novel or imaginative incorporation of technology into the practice, and evidence that ultimately the technology has benefited both the business and the level of clinical care.

All the shortlisted practices ticked most of these boxes but the judges decided that the clear winner was the Cameron Beaumont practice of Wetherby in Yorkshire. Obviously judges were impressed the excellent range of instrumentation the practice



**David Beaumont, optometrist and director of Cameron Beaumont, holds the Technology Practice of the Year Award which was presented by Brian Bowles of sponsor Grafton Optical**

boasts. A fully integrated practice software system operates throughout the practice and is accessible to all clinicians via 10 flat screen interfaces. Investigative equipment includes the Topcon range, as well as a Medmont field analyser. The practice also boasts a GDx, so it is able to assess retinal nerve fibre layer density and monitor patients at risk of glaucoma with a high degree of accuracy.

Every patient is given the option of having a retinal photograph taken and, much to the great interest of

each of the judges, this image can be projected onto a wall of the practice. The benefits here in educating patients about the health of their eyes as well as impressing upon them any specific clinical information, not to mention the 'wow' factor so important in encouraging patients to return, cannot be emphasised enough.

The high level of care offered was demonstrated by the many testimonials accompanying the entry. Most of these were from patients and included a wide range of experiences including those simply pleased with the quality of the service and the final product (spectacles and contact lenses). Among the myriad technological breakthroughs the simple requirement of fitting a pair of spectacles should never be obscured. Other testimonials were from suppliers suggesting a good relationship with other commercial concerns. Overall, the entry was comprehensive, showed excellent use of the technology available and, most importantly, evidence that it was resulting in benefits to the patient. The practice also has no intention of standing still and has already expressed an interest in acquiring the latest OCT technology to enhance its eye health screening. ●

### Technology Practice of the Year 2007 shortlist

- Andrew Martin Optometrists, Sutton Coldfield
- Cameron Beaumont, Wetherby
- McShaw Opticians, Sidmouth
- Parley Optometrists, Dorset

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