

Press release

GfK reports a growth of 0.9 percent in the European optics market in 2016. GfK now expanding into the Australian market.

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GfK has announced its latest figures for key European retail optics markets (Italy, France, Spain and Germany), confirming a total turnover of €17,6 billion for total year 2016 and a sales value growth of 0.9 percent compared to the previous year. GfK is now setting up operations to start tracking the Australian optics market.

GfK's Optics Panel tracks sales data in the optician channel for sunglasses, frames, spectacle lenses, contact lenses and contact lens care. The 2016 figures show an increase of 0.9 percent for the combined optical market of Italy, France, Spain and Germany, with a total turnover of over 17 billion euro.

The four countries experienced varied performances: Italy and Germany drove the growth with sales value increases of +3.4 and +2.7 percent respectively, compared to 2015. Spain recorded a negative performance with a decrease of -2.6 percent, but it was France, which accounts for 38 percent of the overall market value, that pulled down the overall European performance with a flat value trend of -0.5 percent.

Category overview

The spectacle lenses and spectacle frames categories, which represent 80 percent of the overall optics market, have positively driven the performance of opticians in Europe with a sales value growth of +0.9 and +2.2 percent respectively. Contact lenses and care products (representing 9 percent of the total optics sales value) show a modest growth of +0.3 percent. After a remarkable growth of 7 percent in 2015 versus 2014, the sunglasses category is the only negative market in 2016, with a trend of -1.3 percent versus 2015.

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"Innovation has been driving the growth of the contact lens business" reports Gianni Cossar, GfK Global Director Optics & Eyewear. "The introduction of silicone-hydrogel technologies has strongly impacted the reusable market across all categories: multifocal, toric and ultimately spherical. More recently, this trend expanded into the Daily segment – a dynamic that contributed to the growth of the overall category. Consumers increasingly perceive the benefit of innovation and technology.

The spectacle frames market is also growing and evolving. For many years, frames & spectacle lenses have been perceived as a tool to correct sight defects. However, today we are witnessing a big change: besides performing their corrective function, spectacle glasses evolved into a trendy

fashionable accessory used by consumers who are confident to stand out and express their personality. This trend is likely to continue further, becoming more and more effective in bringing fashion into end users' everyday life. Today in the optics industry fashion meets vision care technology”.

GfK Expansion into Australia

“GfK is currently supporting leading players within the optics industry in over 28 countries; in Asia Pacific we have operations already established in 7 markets including India, China and Japan,” continues Gianni Cossar. “We are now approaching the Australian markets and look forward to replicating our model also in this part of the world”.

The optics industry sits largely in the ‘shakeout’ phase of the macro industrial process. This phase is marked by several macro-drivers including consolidation and vertical integration. This translates into evolving sets of challenges for companies and opticians operating in this market space. As the leading, global market research consultancy company in this market, GfK constantly advises companies and retailers about such dynamics and the impact to business operations. This is the reason why we are looking at expanding our geographical scope into Australia.”

For more information about GfK’s activities in Australia, please contact Gwenno Hopkin (gwenno.hopkin@gfk.com) or Darren Varney (darren.varney@gfk.com).

About GfK

GfK is the trusted source of relevant market and consumer information that enables its clients to make smarter decisions. More than 13,000 market research experts combine their passion with GfK’s long-standing data science experience. This allows GfK to deliver vital global insights matched with local market intelligence from more than 100 countries. By using innovative technologies and data sciences, GfK turns big data into smart data, enabling its clients to improve their competitive edge and enrich consumers’ experiences and choices.

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