

## FOCUS ON SMEs

# Young entrepreneur with eye on the future in line for award

## Visionary website aims to compete with major spectacle retailers

Ian Briggs

FOR 18 months, Andre Senyk worked for a high street optical store. But he always knew he wanted to run his own business.

Now the 25-year-old has been recognised for his work creating online prescription glasses and contact lens retailer [www.speckyfoureyes.com](http://www.speckyfoureyes.com)

Mr Senyk, a former Bradford Grammar School pupil, has been nominated as a regional finalist in the Shell Livewire Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards 2007.

After leaving school, Mr Senyk, of Bradford, studied at Anglia Ruskin University, in Cambridge, where he trained as an optician.

After working for 18 months he decided to set up his own venture which he believes can compete with major optical retailers. His business offers prescription glasses for as little as £12.

Mr Senyk is pleased with the early success of the business. He has taken on a full-time member of staff and is planning to recruit a second.

He said the website included features such as the "eyePod", where customers can upload a picture of themselves on which to try frames.

"My hard work and determination has paid off - business is excellent and growing faster than planned," he said. "People are placing multiple orders through the website, and with my prices, they can afford to."

Using the system, customers have their eyes tested at an optician's as normal and use their prescriptions to make orders on the [speckyfoureyes](http://www.speckyfoureyes.com) website.

Meanwhile, an optician's which offers more than 100 different types of designer sunglasses has launched at the Xscape complex, in Castleford.

Simon Briggs, managing director of Extreme-eyewear, said the business aimed to

**Customers have their eyes tested at an optician's as normal and use their prescriptions to make orders on the website.**

make prescription eyewear used for sport more readily available.

Mr Briggs said: "Currently, sport prescription eyewear is difficult and expensive to get hold of with normal opticians not stocking them as they are concentrating on normal spectacle frames which they know can bring in easy money. This is where extreme-eyewear come in.

"We cover a wide range, including diving masks, racket sports, swimming goggles, wrap-around frames, and active sports."

[ian.briggs@yprn.co.uk](mailto:ian.briggs@yprn.co.uk)



Andre Senyk: "My hard work and determination has paid off - business is excellent and growing faster than planned."

### IN BRIEF

#### Challenge for entrepreneurs

Wannabe entrepreneurs have the opportunity to develop their skills at a business course.

Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield are running the "I'm an entrepreneur, get me out of here!" event.

Present students and graduates from the universities are invited to challenge themselves to five days of study, involving visits to start-up companies, workshops, one-to-one discussions and business games to learn new skills.

The course is running from June 2 to 6.

For further information, visit <http://www.sheffieldcete.ac.uk/school.htm>

#### Green light for companies

SMEs in York and North Yorkshire will have the chance to go green by visiting a conference at the University of York.

The "Profiting from Greener Business" event, on July 5, will look at how companies can embrace sustainable business practices and increase profits.

Presentations and workshops will include energy efficiency, waste management, marketing a sustainable image, legislative changes and developing sustainability policy.

For further information, visit [www.greenerprofit.org](http://www.greenerprofit.org)

#### Growth plan in Sri Lanka

A Yorkshire denim jeans manufacturer is aiming to grow its manufacturing base in Sri Lanka.

Rapidname, based in Elland, markets under the Mish Mash label, and also manufactures men's shirts, T-shirts and clothing accessories.

The Sri Lankan base employs more than 170 people but the company hopes to increase this number to 800.