ALAN GLAZIER

Q: Please tell me your name and what you do.

ALAN GLAZIER: My name’s Alan Glazier. I’m an optometrist in private practice in the Maryland suburbs of Washington, D.C. and I’m founder of the industry’s largest and most influential engaged forum, ODs on Facebook.

Q: What did you think when you were chosen to be a part of this Visionaries campaign?

ALAN GLAZIER: My relationship with Vision Expo is something I truly value, and have been building over the years. When I was a child I actually attended the old OptiFair with my father who was an OD; so I always wanted to be part of it. I never imagined that I’d be a part of it at this level. It’s very exciting for me.

Q: Explain ODs on Facebook.

ALAN GLAZIER: ODs on Facebook is a tightknit community of 22,000 people that evolved out of my desire to create a forum where people could share clinical practice management information and have some fun together in a safe environment free of hate and bashing, free of political chatter and free of any kind of discrimination. So they would feel more comfortable, and that has really blossomed into a great place to share because people feel more comfortable about coming out and sharing.

Q: When did you realize it was becoming such a success?

ALAN GLAZIER: I guess I would say early on when we had about 2,000 members and Vision Expo approached me to work together and the idea was born to have the party. The exciting thing about the party was that it was the first time anybody had ever heard of people taking their online connections offline and actually meeting them in the flesh. And since it’s an industry vertical there’s a lot of benefit that comes from having that personal connection as well, which I don’t think you get on most social media communities. So that was when I realized things were changing.

Q: Explain Vision Expo to people who haven’t been, and what that personal connection means.

INTERNATIONAL VISION EXPO 2016
EDUCATION: THURSDAY, APRIL 14–SUNDAY, APRIL 17
EXHIBITION: FRIDAY, APRIL 15–SUNDAY, APRIL 17
JAVITS CENTER | NEW YORK, NY | VisionExpoEast.com | #VisionExpo
ALAN GLAZIER: If you haven’t been to Vision Expo, you’re truly missing out on one of the industry’s great events. It’s not just a conference; it’s an event on every level. Almost every frame vendor, any lens vendor, and new technologies are featured. You can get it all in one place. Everything you’d hope to get. If you just want to get CE you’re probably not going to get as much out of it as if you want to get the whole kit and caboodle because the CE is fantastic, but it’s the networking and the entire experience that do it for me.

Q: What does it give you that you bring back to your practice?

ALAN GLAZIER: Connecting with this conference really enhances my clinical skills, my practice management skills. I’m up on the latest technologies and probably the best thing is that it fires me up. When I go back after the event, I’m back in work mode, I’m ready to go, I’m ready to implement a lot of the new cool stuff that I’ve learned and follow-up on the friendships I’ve developed.

Q: What do you think you bring to Vision Expo when you come?

ALAN GLAZIER: I see myself as a connector. I see myself as somebody who brings people together in a safe, fun way. That has really resonated with the industry and really enhanced my reputation as somebody they want to know and be around and I take energy away from them as well.

Q: Tell us about this party that’s become kind of a hotspot.

ALAN GLAZIER: I never imagined I’d be known as the party guy, you know, that’s just not me. The idea of connecting with people offline really resonated with people and just yesterday I met somebody who’s been in the group since day one and I never had met him in person and, at that moment, even though it wasn’t at the party, I really felt the value of what the party brings. It’s fun, it’s exciting, and people come all out looking for that kind of a thing. We have a lot of young members, our group mirrors the industry in terms of male to female ratio, which no other forum really does well and that alone has really made it resonate.

Q: Anything else you want to add?

ALAN GLAZIER: I’m excited to meet more people and get them to come to the parties and engage in the group. It’s a place where you can share clinical information, share practice management
information and just have some fun with some guidelines on behavior, it's an amazing place to get crowd sourced expert driven content. You can post a question and 50 doctors give you immediate feedback. When you read something in a journal it's been discussed in the group over and over again for weeks sometimes before; so it's very up to date, very modern and I think people get a lot of value joining the group and sharing things with me at Vision Expo.