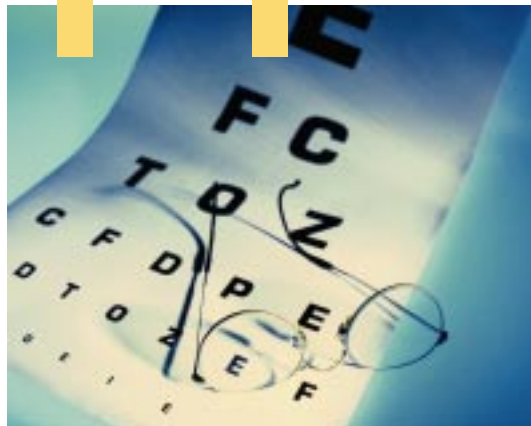


# Eye Care Centers of America, Inc.

San Antonio, Texas



 Eye Care Centers of America, Inc.

## Company Overview

Eye Care Centers of America, Inc. (ECCA), the third largest super-optical chain in the United States, helped to pioneer the concept of one-hour glasses. Since 1984, the company has grown to include over 225 locations in 21 states, operating under the trade names EyeMasters, Binyon's, Visonworks, and Hour Eyes.

## The Challenge

Projecting a rapid period of growth, ECCA wanted to deploy a computing platform that could be pre-configured and quickly rolled out to new stores. The company wanted to utilize Windows®-based POS software but needed a platform that could also run the old customized UNIX-based application during the transition period.

## Glasses in an Hour; Computer Configuration in Five Minutes

To grind and deliver glasses in an hour, you need a computing system that can turn on a dime.

Eye Care Centers of America, Inc. (ECCA) wanted to continue to deliver the kind of service that its customers have come to expect. But they knew that to do so during a period of rapid expansion meant finding a smart, easy, and flexible computing solution.

The company wanted to deploy a faster, more modern, and functional solution than the in-house developed, UNIX-based POS application that it was running over slow, serial cables.

Because ECCA had plans to increase its retail locations from 145 stores to 225 stores over a two-year period, the company needed to quickly find a better system.

It was this challenge that brought ECCA to adopt a solution developed by Wyse® Technology.

## Wyse Winterm Thin Clients.

### A Better Solution

Bill Puetz, vice president of Information Services for ECCA, knew that during transition to a new system, double-duty deployment would be required. Because some stores would run the old UNIX-based application while others would use new Windows-based POS and lab software from Alpha Bytes, the solution they chose had to be able to run both environments.

Manageability was another critical determining factor since there would be no IT personnel in any of ECCA's many retail locations.

**WYSE**  
| | | |

**Smarter. Easier. Thinner.**  
Innovative Thin Clients from Wyse.

## Winterm Thin-Client Benefits

Winterm™ Windows-based terminals were the right solution for ECCA because they offer application capabilities from a broad range of operating environments, including UNIX-, Windows-, Java-, and intranet-based applications. As a terminal replacement solution, Winterm thin clients were very easy for ECCA to adopt because of customized emulations that allowed users to stay productive within a familiar terminal interface.

## The Solution

ECCA has deployed 1,500+ Winterm thin clients in over 225 retail locations nationally. Using a Windows-based POS and lab system application called Alpha Bytes, the company has been able to quickly deploy a rich application that improves customer service and effectively drives lab equipment for grinding lenses onsite.

## Results

ECCA has quickly expanded operations to over 70 new locations in less than two years by deploying pre-configured Wyse Winterm thin clients to its retail locations.

## Architecture

- Winterm 2300 thin clients
- Compaq ProSigna 200s
- Citrix® WinFrame® server software
- Single Pentium processors
- Memory and disk requirements vary per location

## Flexibility Concerns for Double-Duty Deployment Resolved

Puetz was impressed with how simple it was to migrate terminal users (or users of miniature POS 286 PCs, as in ECCA's case) to a Windows-based application.

Although Winterm terminals contain built-in emulations that allow them to function as traditional terminals right out of the box, for ECCA Wyse went one step farther. It developed customized keyboard mapping for ECCA that exactly emulates the macro instructions of the old UNIX program. With the customized keyboard mapping, sales associates were able to stay productive during the transition.

## A Successful Installation

ECCA re-wired all stores with Ethernet before installing the Winterm thin clients. Afterward, the company was able to quickly deploy thin clients to more than 70 new stores in less than one year.

"It was an incredibly smooth migration from UNIX to Windows," said Puetz. "For any UNIX-based environment trying to get to a Windows-based environment, I don't think there is a better way to go. Certainly, none more cost effective," he continued.

## Results

With Winterm terminals installed, ECCA was able to provide faster transactions to customers, an easier system for sales associates to use, and applications that offer more and richer information.

In some stores, the Winterm thin clients not only run the retail side of the business, they also run the labs.

An eye glass prescription is transferred from the POS system to the lab system, where precise machine settings are calculated for lab technicians to use to grind optical glass down to an individual's

specific requirements. In some cases, the system even directly controls the lab machine settings, bypassing the need for human intervention and possible error.

## Widened Deployment in the Future

ECCA sees many ways to expand thin client usage to new areas. Puetz would like to develop and deploy computer-based training for sales associates on Winterm thin clients.

He would also like to mount cameras in stores so that vision-impaired customers can clearly view themselves in a variety of eyewear frames and styles. Customer snapshots would be displayed on Winterm monitors so customers can clearly see what they'll look like in their new frames.

Winterm thin clients are the de facto standard for ECCA and will be deployed in every single store in the network, including all new acquisitions and the 27 new stores that will roll out in 1998.

# WYSE

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