

# To support its team in the face of the Covid-19 crisis, Etnia Barcelona is offering financing plans for customers.

David Pellicer, founder of the Barcelona-based eyewear brand, is tackling the global crisis head-on with a protective attitude towards his team, customers and the Etnia Barcelona Fundación.



## 1. What are the company's priorities in the face of the Covid-19 crisis?

The first priority is to **defend human capital at all costs**. Our value chain is made up of our people and they have always been our priority.

Second, to support our customers unconditionally. They are our *raison d'être* and now it's our turn to act. That's why we have continued providing all of our services and have been offering our support. As a primary measure, we have **expanded our financing plans** to allow more flexibility for missing, delayed and early payments. As a company, we also need traction to keep the wheels turning but we want to make it as easy as possible to emerge from this situation. Now it's time to act by taking extraordinary measures.

Thirdly, from our Etnia Barcelona Foundation, we are working on a **post Covid-19 project**. We have always helped vulnerable communities, who will be even harder hit by this crisis. That's why we will be distributing a total of 150,000 pairs of glasses to optical stores so that they can help struggling families in their area. Through this collaborative project between our foundation and optical stores, our efforts can have greater reach.

## 2. How is the crisis affecting you? What measures are being applied to company projects?

We have had two cases of Covid-19 within Etnia, both of whom have fortunately recovered. But we all know people who have died or suffered. As a result, what has affected us most is seeing people around us suffer. We have had days when we've felt sad, angry or scared. But we are also discovering a society that is willing to come together in the face of adversity and that people are helping each other more than ever. Now it's time for companies to do the same.

As for health-related measures, we are doing everything necessary, ensuring that our facilities and collections are constantly disinfected. **Our entire sales network uses sanitary materials**. We all know that the customer needs a maximum sense of safety in order to feel comfortable making purchases—that's why the hygiene, protection and disinfection of materials is key. It must be very strict.

As for our working processes, we have maximized our digital tools. Since day zero, we were able to get **90% of our team working remotely** thanks to Teams, our smartworking software. Our Intranet and Extranet for optical stores have given us the support we need in these extraordinary times. Our IT team has worked on **accelerated digitization** and we can't thank these colleagues enough.

Advanced digital tools have allowed us to give our shoppers a quality customer experience, albeit from a distance. We've implemented the **virtual fitting room** in the Extranet to optimize the experience. We have activated **chat**, which our Customer Service team uses to provide real-time service. We are generating new presentation formats for our products in order to exponentially increase digital communication with our customers. We know that it will never replace the physical shopping experience but we are also aware that we need to offer the best possible tools to safely bring our service closer to customers in these exceptional circumstances.

### ***3. Has this unprecedented situation been a roadblock for any of the company's important projects?***

We have three interdepartmental projects across the company. And the virus has accelerated them.

The first is **protecting the optical store channel**. We have grown as a brand because of our work alongside optical stores. We are focusing on creating tools to protect that channel. That's why we created Drive to Store, which diverts sales from our websites and Flagship store to the optical store point-of-sale, thereby encouraging traffic and sales at our trade customers' outlets. Now, starting in September, our eyewear will contain a **unique code** that increases the traceability of the glasses and allows for a greater control of distribution to authorized points. This will also allow for the warranty to be activated at the optical store at the time of sale. We see our customer as a partner—that's why we support cooperation and defend their territory. We are very proud to activate initiatives like the **Partnership Project**.

The second is the Responsibility project, encompassing the Foundation and Sustainability, which internally we call **"Fuck Plastic"**. Our frames are made of natural acetate and our lenses are made of mineral glass. We are removing all plastic from our packaging and replacing it with sustainable materials. We are also auditing all of our processes to detect everything that we can and should improve. But the best contribution we can make is to produce a long-lasting product and to continue building a brand that is committed to the environment.

Our latest **Warriors 2020 campaign** is already a step in that direction. With the impact of the current circumstances, it has gained even more meaning and transcendence. We can see what's happening with our own eyes and want to contribute however we can.



Four years ago, we created the **Etnia Barcelona Foundation** in response to this concern. We've been playing our part non-stop ever since. We traveled Senegal to set up a non-profit optical store and have been working with other organizations and volunteers to get prescription glasses to children in disadvantaged areas. The Etnia team has demonstrated a huge capacity to work, particularly with charitable causes. Extending the Foundation to our customers is something we are particularly proud of.

The third is the project to **locate** our **Barcelona** Production plant within our Headquarters, over six floors and covering over 6,000 m2. Manufacturing will be located at the same place as the entire design and industrialization team, along with the other company departments. This will enable faster innovation and streamline the customized capsules and collections for our optical store customers.

#### **4. What can you tell us about future projects and launches?**

The 2021 collection is the best collection we've ever created. Seriously. Between now and January, we will introduce five new worlds and three capsules that showcase our DNA. **Color, Art and Innovation** are the mood music for our upcoming creations.

In May, we began with the introduction of IBIZA Vol.2, a unique collection for the optical sector, inspired by the first **fluorescent** model created by Etnia Barcelona (in 2003). It will transport us to that colorful and happy island spirit. It's that feeling of freedom and summer that we long for today, more than ever. I believe that when society changes its mindset, this drives a change in the way of perceiving life. Perhaps it's time to change skin. Winston Churchill turned the lipstick into a war-time icon and Christian Dior created the "New Look" after World War II, blazing a path to a true fashion revolution.

This is a different kind of war, with many victims and plenty of heroes—like our health care providers, to whom we will never fully be able to express our gratitude. It's time to look forward and take action by valuing what we've learned. It's a period of change, but more than anything, of sky-high hopes. In the future, a higher awareness and happiness awaits. And, like always, a Herculean effort.

