



## **Study Finds Soft Contact Lens Patients Significantly More Profitable than Glasses-Only Wearers**

Topline Data Shows 29% to 86% Profit Advantages from Contact Lens Prescribing

**WASHINGTON, D.C., July 29, 2026**—A new study from a team of ophthalmic and economics researchers has shown that soft contact lens patients create a sizable practice profitability advantage compared to equivalent glasses-only patients. The upside ranges from 29% to 86% annually (*Table 1*), with substantial potential gains over a lifetime of wear.

To calculate the differences, 20 United States-based eye care practices each submitted four years of anonymized data for 30 patients, as well as detailed operations data such as professional fees, chair time, staff compensation, and secondary revenue streams. The resulting average annual customer-level profits across contact lens types are \$436 for spheres, \$453 for torics, and \$485 for multifocals (*Table 2*), compared to \$244 for single vision and \$376 for progressive glasses patients (*Table 3*).

Analysis was conducted by [Professor Philip Morgan](#) (University of Manchester), [Professor Lyndon Jones](#) (CORE / University of Waterloo), and [Professors Ash Morgan](#) and [John Whitehead](#) (Department of Economics, Appalachian State University). [Contact Lens Institute](#)® (CLI) commissioned the study as part of its multi-year *See Tomorrow* initiative.

“It’s clear that contact lens customers can generate greater average annual profit, even with higher service and product costs. Our findings suggest that recurring purchases, greater examination frequency, and opportunities for ancillary spending may make contact lens wearers particularly attractive from a customer lifetime value perspective,” said Professor Philip Morgan.

The work is the first-ever analysis of contact lens profitability in the U.S. It comes 25 years after publication of the widely cited [London Business School “Seeing Things Clearly”](#) study, which looked at the topic in five European markets.

“The new data squarely challenges profitability myths that can creep into conversation despite a lack of evidence. For instance, prior [CLI See Tomorrow work](#) showed that more than half of eye care practices don’t even attempt to quantify the business impact of their contact lens patients. Among those who do, they significantly underestimate the relative profitability compared to glasses-only patients,” said Stan Rogaski, CLI’s executive director.

“We know that wearers deeply value their contact lenses for vision, convenience, and lifestyle, and are willing to pay for those benefits. Our hope is that these findings spur practices to reconsider their approaches to providing the best possible care, including prescribing both contact lenses and glasses for patient and practice gain alike.”

The complete findings will be published later this year as part of a comprehensive [CLI See Tomorrow](#) report.

Contact Lens Institute advances the latest innovations in safe and effective contact lens and lens care products and services that provide unique benefits to patients while satisfying the evolving needs of eye care professionals. CLI undertakes activities that properly assess, enhance, promote and balance contact lens and lens care industry welfare and growth, including the safe use of products in the marketplace. Its members include Alcon, Bausch + Lomb, CooperVision, and Johnson & Johnson Vision. For more information, visit [contactlensinstitute.org](http://contactlensinstitute.org).

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**Table 1: Average Annual Customer-Level Profitability**

**Contact Lens Customers to Glasses-Only Customers**

|                                      | <b>Contact Lens<br/>Average Profit</b> | <b>Glasses<br/>Average Profit</b> | <b>Percentage<br/>Difference</b> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| CL Sphere to Glasses SV              | \$436                                  | \$244                             | <b>78.6%</b>                     |
| CL Toric to Glasses SV               | \$453                                  | \$244                             | <b>85.6%</b>                     |
| CL Multifocal to Glasses Progressive | \$485                                  | \$376                             | <b>28.9%</b>                     |

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**Table 2: Average Annual Customer-Level Profit for Contact Lens Customers**

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|                                             | Spheres      | Torics       | Multifocals    |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Revenues</b>                             |              |              |                |
| Contact Lens Sales                          | \$602        | \$617        | \$736          |
| Other Revenues                              | \$135        | \$182        | \$182          |
| Exams                                       | \$170        | \$163        | \$161          |
| <b>Average Revenue</b>                      | <b>\$907</b> | <b>\$963</b> | <b>\$1,079</b> |
| <b>Costs</b>                                |              |              |                |
| Cost of Goods Sold                          | \$406        | \$444        | \$525          |
| Labor                                       | \$66         | \$66         | \$68           |
| <b>Average Cost</b>                         | <b>\$472</b> | <b>\$510</b> | <b>\$594</b>   |
| <b>Average Annual Customer-Level Profit</b> | <b>\$436</b> | <b>\$453</b> | <b>\$485</b>   |

**Table 3: Average Annual Customer-Level Profit for Glasses Customers**

|                         | Single Vision | Progressive  |
|-------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Revenues</b>         |               |              |
| Eyeglasses Sales        | \$343         | \$600        |
| Other Revenues          | \$62          | \$117        |
| Exams                   | \$102         | \$78         |
| <b>Average Revenues</b> | <b>\$507</b>  | <b>\$795</b> |
| <b>Costs</b>            |               |              |
| Cost of Goods Sold      | \$221         | \$378        |
| Labor                   | \$42          | \$40         |
| <b>Average Cost</b>     | <b>\$263</b>  | <b>\$419</b> |

Average Annual  
Customer-Level Profit

\$244

\$376

## The Contact Lens Profit Advantage

*SOFT CONTACT LENS PATIENTS CAN OFFER A SIZABLE PRACTICE PROFITABILITY ADVANTAGE COMPARED TO EQUIVALENT GLASSES-ONLY PATIENTS, WITH EVEN MORE POTENTIAL SUBSTANTIAL GAINS OVER A LIFETIME OF WEAR.*



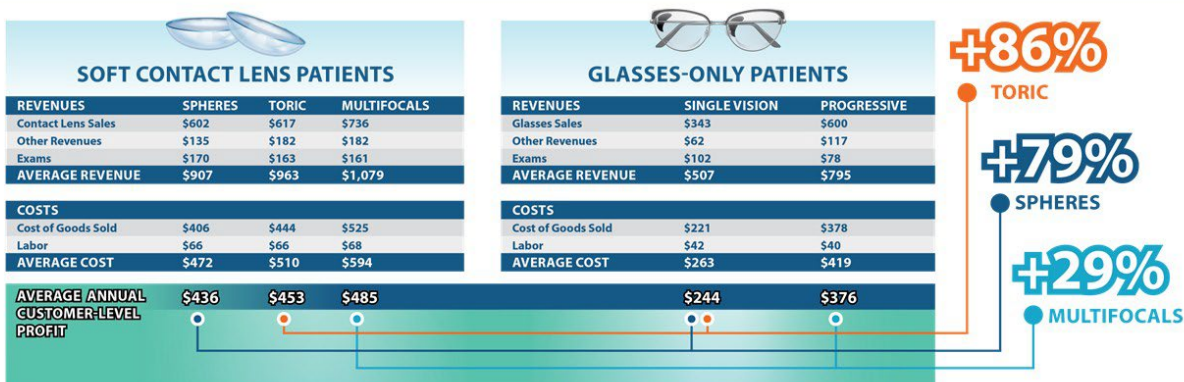
Visit [ContactLensInstitute.org](https://ContactLensInstitute.org) to learn more.

P. Morgan, L. Jones, A. Morgan, J. Whitehead. Contact Lens Institute®-sponsored study topline findings, July 2026. U.S. patient sample (n=600), U.S. eye care practice sample (n=20).



## Average Annual Profit Per Patient Type

*SOFT CONTACT LENS CUSTOMERS GENERATE GREATER AVERAGE ANNUAL PROFIT COMPARED TO EQUIVALENT GLASSES-ONLY PATIENTS, EVEN WITH HIGHER SERVICE AND PRODUCT COSTS. RECURRING PURCHASES, GREATER EXAMINATION FREQUENCY, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ANCILLARY SPENDING MAY MAKE CONTACT LENS WEARERS PARTICULARLY ATTRACTIVE FROM A LIFETIME VALUE PERSPECTIVE.*



Visit [ContactLensInstitute.org](https://ContactLensInstitute.org) to learn more.

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Professor Philip Morgan





Stan Rogaski, Contact Lens Institute



# CONTACT LENS INSTITUTE®

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