

# My Benesch My Team – Shopko Optical

FEBRUARY 10, 2021

“As transaction attorneys, Benesch understands both sides of the deal and knows how to be creative to overcome obstacles and get deals done. They work with us as a team, always looking out for what’s good for us.”

Donna Capichano  
Chief Development Officer  
Shopko Optical

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In May 2019, [Shopko Optical](#) had a bold plan to introduce 80 freestanding locations on an aggressive timeline. Donna and her team hit the ground running, working with Benesch to facilitate leasing 80 new storefronts in 180 days. Now, with the help of a custom leasing platform and document management process, Shopko Optical has the means to efficiently manage ongoing leasing matters while continuing to rely on Benesch to execute new deals.

With headquarters in Green Bay, WI, Shopko Optical is a trusted provider of quality eyewear and expert eye care for over 40 years and currently operates 92 stores in 11 states. The optical retailer has plans to open over 50 stores in 2021. The following is a testimonial from Shopko Optical’s Chief Development Officer, Donna Capichano.

## ***Tell me about Shopko Optical.***

Shopko Optical has offered patient-focused and convenient eyecare, quality eyewear, and great service provided by experienced optometrists and opticians for more than 40 years. More than just a place to try on eyeglasses and order your next pair of contacts, Shopko Optical provides its patients with knowledgeable, caring, and experienced optometrists and eyecare professionals.

The team at every Shopko Optical center is focused on providing specialized, individualized eye exams, contact lens fittings, and the diagnosis and treatment of eye disease. With nearly 700 doctors (independent Doctors of Optometry in IA, ID, MT, SD, and WA) and opticians, Shopko Optical operates 92 locations across the midwest and northeast regions of the U.S. Continued growth is expected in 2021 and beyond.

## ***How did you start working with Benesch?***

We knew we needed to partner with a law firm, and we were introduced to Benesch through Monarch Alternative Capital, the private investment firm that acquired Shopko Optical in May 2019. One of the first things we did when we started working together was to clean up and standardize the LOIs (Letters of Intent) and lease forms. We had the lease mirror much of what’s in the LOI to make the transactions very smooth.

That teamwork and process enabled us to open 80 stores in 180 days, and we've continued to grow. COVID slowed our plans for 2020, but even in the midst of a pandemic, we were able to open another 11 stores. We ended 2019 with 81 stores and rounded out 2020 with 92 stores.

***Do you continue to work with Benesch?***

Benesch handles all of our leases for new deals. I have a weekly call with Benesch every Tuesday to go through the list of deals we have going. Can we make them move quicker? Do I need to ping the landlord? When we're working on 80 deals, it can get hectic, so we really need to have systems and processes in place that allow for quick and easy lease execution, and that's exactly what we have with Benesch.

***What do you like about working with Benesch?***

I have worked with many attorneys throughout my career, and the team at Benesch is fantastic. Because they're transaction attorneys, they understand both sides of the deal and work to make the deal happen. Some attorneys argue just for argument's sake-that's not Benesch. They're not lax by any means, but their main interest is in putting the deal together, not in creating obstacles.

Benesch knows how to get deals done and that's really important to a growing company like Shopko Optical. We work together, and they are an extension of the team here. They're always concerned with our best interest. They also know how to be creative, which helps to overcome any obstacles. They're also extremely responsive!

***What's the value of working with Benesch to your company?***

I don't know how to put a dollar value to working with Benesch, but if you don't get leases signed, you don't open stores. If you don't open stores, you don't generate revenue. Benesch makes sure we're able to open stores!