

(Local)

## **WISCONSIN VISION AND DANNY GOKEY SIGN TWO-YEAR AGREEMENT**

### ***Former American Idol Finalist and Country Music Recording Artist to Wear Wisconsin Vision Glasses, Appear in Advertising and at Stores***

New Berlin, WI March 5, 2010 -- Wisconsin Vision announced today that former American Idol finalist and current country music recording artist Danny Gokey has signed a two-year marketing agreement with the state's largest independently owned optical company. The agreement is the company's largest ever marketing investment and first use of a celebrity spokesperson. For Gokey, known for his passion for eye wear, the signing is his first long-term endorsement deal and his first with a Wisconsin-based business.

Under the agreement, Gokey will wear up to 60 pairs of Wisconsin Vision glasses, be featured in Wisconsin Vision Milwaukee-area marketing campaigns including television and outdoor advertising and social media, and make personal in-store appearances. News of the agreement comes during a big week for the Milwaukee-native who performs Saturday night in his home town and will wear Wisconsin Vision glasses. Earlier in the week Gokey released his first 19 Recordings/RCA Nashville debut album, *My Best Days*, and appeared on American Idol also in Wisconsin Vision lenses.

"Milwaukee will always be home and supporting area-based businesses is important to me," Gokey said. "I'm known for my eyewear. With Wisconsin Vision I will not only have the best in fashion, but also the most accurate lenses available made right here in Wisconsin by a family-owned company."

Gokey's first Wisconsin Vision television commercial premieres in early May with filming scheduled for later this month. Outdoor advertising also starts in May while documentary-style videos featuring Gokey are expected to be posted to Wisconsin Vision's web site [www.wisconsinvision.com](http://www.wisconsinvision.com), Facebook fan page and other social media outlets in late March.

"With our relationship with Danny, we'll generate immediate excitement for our brand. It's a fast and economical way to make an impact and tell the Wisconsin Vision story," said Paul George, chairman and owner, Wisconsin Vision. "Danny will certainly raise awareness of the fashion benefits of our brand, but the real wow factor will come when customers put on their new pair of glasses and see better than they have ever seen before."

Late last year Wisconsin Vision hired their first outside advertising agency Meyer & Wallis, a Milwaukee and Indianapolis-based firm, to increase awareness of the company's image, retail locations and in-store experience. Until that time, Wisconsin Vision's growth had come from building relationships with labor unions and vision health care benefits providers, followed by a coupon co-op mailing service strategy. Meyer & Wallis' first priority was to secure and finalize the Gokey relationship.

"We're Idol watchers. The more we learned about Danny, his passion for glasses and his commitment to his family, faith and the Milwaukee community, the more we knew he was the right fit for

## **Wisconsin Vision and Gokey/2**

our company,” Darren Horndasch, Wisconsin Vision’s president and CEO. “We’re not going to find a connection like that with anyone else.”

Financial terms of the agreement with Gokey were not disclosed.

Wisconsin Vision has 21 Wisconsin locations and operates 6 locations in Illinois and Indiana as Heartland Vision. Family-owned and founded in 1979, brothers Paul and Andy George are principals. The company is also managing partner of Chicago-area Eye Boutique, with 7 locations. Wisconsin Vision carries the largest selection of frame styles of any competitor with more than 2,000 choices at every location. Licensed Doctors of Optometry perform all eye exams while lab professionals make lenses using the industry’s most advanced equipment at LBC Optics, also owned by the George family. Wisconsin Vision, Heartland Vision, Eye Boutique and LBC Optics currently employ approximately 200 employees.

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Wisconsin Vision Media Contacts:

Pam Kassner, 414-510-1838, [pam@superpear.com](mailto:pam@superpear.com)

Darren Horndasch, 262-432-2005 Ext. 3113, [dhorndasch@wisconsinvision.com](mailto:dhorndasch@wisconsinvision.com)