

THE
CONQUERING
UNCERTAINTY
ISSUE



TO FUTURE-PROOF CONTACT LENS GIANT
COOPERVISION, PRESIDENT JERRY WARNER
IS KEEPING HIS

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BY JON BALL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY VALERIE SORRELLS

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—Jerry Warner
President, CooperVision

In a world defined by volatility, Jerry Warner doesn’t blink. As president of CooperVision—a division of global medical device company, CooperCompanies, and one of the world’s largest contact lens manufacturers—Mr. Warner is guiding a multibillion-dollar enterprise through an era where disruption is constant and certainty is fleeting. But rather than play defense, he’s doubled down—on global agility, manufacturing innovation, data-fueled forecasting, and a culture built for transformation.

“Uncertainty isn’t new,” Mr. Warner says. “What’s new is the speed. And if you’re going to lead in that environment, you can’t afford to stand still.”

That mindset isn’t theoretical. It’s the throughline behind CooperVision’s strong performance in FY2024, which saw \$2.609 billion in revenue (up 8% year-over-year) and 9% organic growth, fueled by strong demand in daily disposables, torics, and specialty lenses.

With operations in over 130 countries, a global workforce of nearly 13,000, and a strong heritage of addressing the toughest vision challenges, such as astigmatism, presbyopia, childhood myopia, and

irregular corneas, CooperVision is not just navigating disruption—it’s outpacing it. And at the center of it all is Mr. Warner’s blueprint for responsive leadership: align on strategic advantage, invest in future-ready systems and operations, constantly assess cultural priorities, and communicate with radical clarity—even when the path forward is anything but.

Steadfast Strategy Meets Dynamic Execution

Ask Mr. Warner how CooperVision maintains performance amid economic unease, shifting regulations, and global supply shocks, and he begins with a paradox: stay the course but move fast.

“I wouldn’t say traditional strategic planning is obsolete,” Mr. Warner explains. “There are tenets of strategy that still matter deeply—especially around your strategic advantage. But the execution model? That has to evolve.”

For CooperVision, this means anchoring to long-term goals while empowering teams to course-correct in real time. “It’s about knowing what matters most and making sure your organization has the confidence to stay aligned, even when the market shifts underneath you.”

That approach has proved essential as the company navigates challenges like rising tariffs, supply chain complexity, and continuing strong competition in the contact lens sector. Mr. Warner recalls a recent global town hall where he addressed questions about market volatility.

“I told the team: our strategy isn’t invalidated by noise in the system. As long as we execute with discipline, our advantage holds. But we have to remain

alert—reading signals, adjusting tactics, and communicating constantly.”

That last point is critical. In Mr. Warner’s view, leaders don’t just set direction—they reinforce belief.

“The worst thing you can do in uncertainty is react impulsively and create confusion. You can acknowledge external pressures, but you have to reaffirm what you stand for. That steadiness is what your people are watching for.”

Core Vision

CooperVision offers one of the industry’s widest ranges of soft contact lenses—providing high-quality, personalized options to meet diverse vision needs, lifestyles, and budgets.



PHOTO BY VALERIE SORRELLS

“WE VIEW TECHNOLOGY AS AN ENABLER. IN MANUFACTURING, IT ALLOWS US TO SCALE A COMPLEX PRODUCT PORTFOLIO WITH PRECISION AND SPEED. IT’S HOW WE TURN DATA INTO DECISIONS THAT SERVE CUSTOMERS BETTER.”

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The Clarity of Adaptive Leadership

If Mr. Warner sounds grounded, it’s because he’s spent more than 25 years building that muscle. From his early days at Bausch & Lomb to his 13-year trajectory at CooperVision, he’s honed a leadership style that balances conviction with flexibility. He defines adaptive leadership as a daily practice rooted in two things: knowing your audience and engaging with intention.

“It’s not about one-size-fits-all communication,” Mr. Warner says. “It’s about understanding what each function or region is dealing with and tailoring your leadership approach to meet them where they are—whether that’s regulatory, commercial, or manufacturing.”

In a company that operates across continents and disciplines, that nuance matters. And Mr. Warner insists adaptive leadership doesn’t mean being reactive. “It means being in tune. It means filtering the noise, identifying what’s real, and moving with purpose.”

That ethos is embedded throughout CooperVision, reinforced by a leadership culture that values transparency, consistency, and presence. “People aren’t just listening to what you say,” Mr. Warner adds. “They’re watching how you show up. Every signal matters.”

He laughs when asked about his own leadership “tells.” “The team knows when I start rubbing my head, something’s coming. It’s a nonverbal sign I’m processing something hard. But that’s okay. What matters is they also know I’ll come back with clarity—and that we’ll get through it together.”

Technology as an Enabler, Not a Crutch

One of CooperVision’s most powerful transformations under Mr. Warner’s leadership is their journey on technology utilization. The company has made major investments in smart manufacturing, enhanced forecasting, and is now focusing on digital infrastructure. But Mr. Warner cautions against tech for tech’s sake.

“We view technology as an enabler,” he says. “In manufacturing, it’s what allows us to scale a complex product portfolio with precision and speed. In our business systems, it’s how we turn data into decisions that serve customers better.”

With more than 4 billion contact lenses moving through CooperVision’s global distribution system each year, intelligent automation is essential. But Mr. Warner sees agility—not scale—as the end goal.

“We’re more complex than our competitors. We don’t just do high-volume, low-mix production. We also deliver low-volume, high-mix specialty products. The only way to do that at scale is through smart systems and continuous improvement.”

CooperVision’s smart operational capabilities now span multiple facilities, including major expansions in Puerto Rico and New York, all powered by renewable

energy and optimized for agility. “We’ve put \$500 million into infrastructure in Puerto Rico alone,” Mr. Warner says. “That’s not just capacity. That’s capability.”

Forecasting in a Foggy World

One hard truth accepted by most senior executives is that even the best systems face one problem: unpredictability. That’s why Mr. Warner and his team have deepened their use of scenario modeling and sensitivity analysis.

“You can’t plan in straight lines anymore,” he says. “We use talent and tools that model multiple futures, so we’re

Clear Command

At CooperVision, Mr. Warner leads with adaptability and purpose—empowering teams across the organization—and across disciplines—to navigate complexity, align fast, and deliver with precision.



PHOTO BY VALERIE SORRELLS



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Manufacturing Might

In response to the growing adoption of its specialty contact lenses by eye care professionals, CooperVision has invested in several new manufacturing facilities over the past few years, including locations in Gilbert, Ariz., and Sherbrooke, Quebec.

not caught flat-footed—especially when regulatory environments shift or macro trends accelerate.”

Still, Mr. Warner is pragmatic. “Planning models don’t replace judgment. You have to understand the limits of precision and supplement it with experience, intuition, and boots-on-the-ground knowledge.” He adds, “We don’t just model for cost. We model for service, for resilience, and for growth.”

The company’s modeling helped guide decisions during times of economic volatility. Mr. Warner notes that without rapid, AI-assisted signal detection across the supply chain, those issues might have caused significant slowdowns.

Synchronizing R&D, Manufacturing, and Commercial Strategy

Within CooperVision, innovation doesn’t live in silos. Whether it’s launching the first and only FDA-approved MiSight® 1 day myopia control lens, or the world-class MyDay® Toric Parameter Expansion lens with Optimized Toric Lens Geometry™, success comes from orchestrating multiple disciplines at once.

“R&D, manufacturing, and commercial have to move in harmony,” Mr. Warner says. “If one gets ahead or falls behind, the whole system misaligns.”

That’s where lifecycle management comes in—a centralized team that coordinates product development from concept through global launch, integrating insights from regulatory, supply chain, and customer-facing teams.

“It’s like assembling an airplane in mid-flight,” Mr. Warner says.

“The details are complex. But when we get it right, we move from idea to implementation without losing momentum or quality.”

Scaling Without Siloes

That tightly choreographed approach has also paid off as CooperVision scales globally without sacrificing quality or control.

“We are building an organization that can scale without becoming siloed,” Mr. Warner says. “That’s rare in a global company our size.”

Part of the formula lies in Mr. Warner’s belief in “modular alignment”—allowing for local flexibility within a globally harmonized framework. That’s especially important in regulated industries where region-specific compliance requirements can make or break speed to market.

“We have country teams that are empowered to act. But they’re also aligned to a common operating rhythm, shared values, and unified systems. That’s how we move fast without spinning out.”

CooperVision’s international investments reflect that strategy. In Puerto Rico, their Juana Díaz site currently employs more than 2,400 people and operates as a fully automated manufacturing facility, utilizing advanced technology and innovation across all aspects of operation. Its Ponce site, currently under construction, will be a state-of-the-art facility that further strengthens its presence and capabilities in Puerto Rico. In Southampton, U.K., CooperVision is building a leading-edge technical, commercial, and business hub known as The Vision Centre.



BIO: JERRY WARNER PRESIDENT, COOPERVISION

Jerry Warner serves as President of CooperVision Inc. He previously held the title of Executive Vice President - President Americas & Global Commercial Functions and prior to that served as President of the Americas and Senior Vice President of Global Marketing. Before joining CooperVision in 2012, Mr. Warner spent 17 years with Bausch + Lomb in a variety of marketing and management roles, prior to which he worked in sales and marketing at Bristol Myers Squibb. He has extensive global and domestic experience in the medical device, pharmaceutical, and consumer packaged goods categories.

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—Jon Kleinman
Partner, Insigniam

This facility is designed to foster cross-functional collaboration and promote innovation, creating real advantages for eyecare practitioners and wearers alike. “We’ve built an ecosystem that’s not just big—it’s responsive,” Mr. Warner says. “That’s the difference.”

The People Behind the Precision

Regardless of the accolades about his leadership, Mr. Warner is quick to shift credit from systems to people.

“Culture is what allows strategy to function in chaos,” he says. “And for us, that culture starts with trust and accountability.”

He’s worked to hardwire these values into CooperVision’s global leadership DNA. Mr. Warner and his executive leadership team are finding new ways to bring company values to life, ensuring all employees are aligned and engaged and that CooperVision remains—in their words—“fit for the future.” Together, they are putting an end to outdated and redundant ways of working. They are changing processes and adjusting their leadership styles to better empower their people and support ongoing cultural evolution.

Mr. Warner also emphasizes a “teach-back” culture—where learnings from one market are rapidly transferred and tested in others. This learning culture plays a critical role in navigating uncertainty.

Whether adapting to local regulations, responding to competitor moves, or seizing emerging opportunities, Mr. Warner believes his teams thrive because they are trained to think systemically—and empowered to act quickly.

“It’s not just about making decisions fast,” he adds. “It’s about making them fast and then inspecting the outcome. There are very few decisions we make that cannot be improved, updated, and even reversed once we see our decisions in action. And that only happens when people understand the full context they’re operating in.”

That context includes not just quarterly metrics, but a fundamental commitment to improving the way people see. Mr. Warner and the team regularly bring customer and practitioner stories into executive meetings—reinforcing the why behind the work.

It’s this values-driven approach that resonates throughout CooperVision’s global workforce. From high-tech manufacturing lines across the world to R&D hubs in California and the U.K., Mr. Warner believes the power of people is what enables technology to scale—and purpose to stick.

“We are investing in automation, AI, and smart infrastructure,” he says, “but none of it works without a deeply aligned culture. We’re not just building factories—we’re building capability. And capability is always a human equation.”



Leadership Through a Personal Lens

Mr. Warner’s perspective on leadership was forged early. As the son of parents in healthcare, he grew up in an environment where purpose and service were everyday values. “You don’t forget the way patients look at someone who’s helped them,” he says. “That stuck with me.”

His own path led him through both commercial and operational leadership roles—including stints at Bristol Myers Squibb and Bausch & Lomb. That mix of experience now shapes his conviction that business performance and human impact must move in lockstep.

“Purpose doesn’t slow you down—it sharpens you,” he says. “It forces alignment about what matters. And it helps you rally people even when the road is hard.”

He applies this thinking not just to customers, but to CooperVision’s global workforce. Mr. Warner was instrumental in launching global well-being initiatives, improving communication transparency, and making frontline safety a non-negotiable. Today, he sees employee engagement and alignment of purpose as critical assets in a market defined by disruption.

“When you can’t promise stability, you have to offer meaning,” he says. “We’re not just growing. We’re growing with precision. It’s not about chasing every opportunity—it’s about aligning the right capabilities to the right needs.”

He’s equally proud of CooperVision’s sustainability initiatives, including its partnership with Plastic Bank, which has prevented over 500 million plastic bottles from entering oceans since the program’s inception.

Mitigating Myopia

Managing a child’s myopia—a vision condition where distant objects appear blurry due to the eye growing too long, often worsening as the child grows—requires more than just vision correction. That’s why CooperVision established a new standard of care for treating myopia in children via their MiSight® 1 day contact lens product line.

Live Brightly

“THE PLAYBOOK IS BEING REWRITTEN EVERY DAY. BUT WE KNOW WHAT WE STAND FOR. WE KNOW HOW TO LEARN. AND WE KNOW HOW TO RESPOND.”

—Jerry Warner
President, CooperVision

“We think about impact not just in terms of product, but in terms of footprint,” he says. “That’s why we’re embedding sustainability into our operations, from LEED-certified facilities to regional partnerships that reduce waste and increase community value.”

A Clear Vision for the Future

Asked what legacy he wants to leave, Mr. Warner didn’t hesitate. “I want us to be known as the company that moved fast without breaking trust. The one that delivered innovation without sacrificing quality. That scaled without losing its soul.”

If that sounds ambitious, that’s the point. In Mr. Warner’s world, leadership is about tension—between speed and care, data and empathy, systems and people.

“The playbook is being rewritten every day,” he says. “Our job is to keep learning, keep listening, and keep leading. Not from a place of fear, but from a place of clarity.”

For Mr. Warner, it’s not about eliminating uncertainty—it’s about having the resolve to act in the face of it.

“The reality is we don’t know what next year will throw at us,” he says. “But we know what we stand for. We know how to learn. And we know how to respond.”

For executives navigating their own high-stakes environments, Mr. Warner’s example offers a clear signal: in a world where uncertainty is permanent, the advantage goes to those who build for change, act with conviction, and lead with purpose. **IQ**

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