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AGENCIES



**AT THE HELM**  
Matt Brown, CEO

**PERFORMANCE**  
Expecting to hit \$30 million in revenue in first full year under new CEO

**HIGHLIGHTS**  
Brought in Matt Brown as CEO

Also hired Tina Fascetti as chief creative officer, Fred Petito as chief customer engagement officer and Leslie Prestoy as chief learning solutions officer

Omar Shoheiber now heads the Princeton office

Consolidated all accounts under Guidemark Health umbrella

**CHALLENGES**  
Bringing all predecessor companies together to operate seamlessly

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A to Z, beginning on page 183

“PEOPLE WHO WANT TO GET BACK TO DOING WORK AGAIN, THEY'RE LIKE, 'HEY, LET ME IN!'”

—MATT BROWN

## GUIDEMARK HEALTH

Unifying legacy biz and winning biz



When Matt Brown arrived at Guidemark from ICC Lowe last fall, he liked what he saw. The company's agency holdings, which included Convergent, Tricore, eCrossings Media, QD Healthcare Group and Medical DecisionPoint, were small but widely respected, especially in the med-ed space. What Brown didn't like was the way they were structured, how their independence made it challenging to scale up for clients who wanted a fuller slate of capabilities.

He didn't waste any time making changes. The company erased all existing agency brand names and unified them under the Guidemark Health moniker, which debuted ahead of schedule in January. Now 115 full-timers strong but set to grow to 130 before the year is out, Guidemark will likely crack the \$30 million revenue mark in 2015.

The moves weren't merely ornamental. Guidemark didn't just clump the handful of shops under a single umbrella and call it an afternoon. Rather, Brown rearranged the older companies' existing assets in such a manner as to create what he believes to be an entirely new model. “That was the opportunity here, to create something different and carve out these really cool unique new roles,” he says.

Guidemark's new structure is expert-driven, heavy on individuals with UX, learning strategy and behavioral psychology know-how. “Roles like that you generally wouldn't see in an agency, or certainly not full-time. But they're all embedded

here,” Brown explains. At the same time, Brown says Guidemark has already proved a happy landing spot for “people who want to get back to doing work again. They're like, ‘Hey, let me in!’”

Brown exaggerates his voice for that last bit, but there's some seriousness behind the sentiment. “So much top creative and strategic talent is frustrated. They get to a certain place in their careers, then they keep getting pulled out of work to sit in administrative meetings,” he says. Guidemark, then, sees itself as a kind of a protective haven where creatives create and administrators administrate. The company's biggest gets so far include chief creative officer Tina Fascetti, chief customer engagement officer Fred Petito and chief learning solutions officer Leslie Prestoy. Additionally, several higher-ups from Guidemark's predecessor agencies remain in pivotal roles—among them Omar Shoheiber, a Tricore veteran who now heads Guidemark's Princeton office.

Much of Brown's attention for the past nine months has gone to ensuring that the various companies synch. “Whenever you have legacy businesses, you have legacy structures and processes,” he says. “There were multiple health-insurance plans and payrolls and work-from-home policies. I know that sounds kind of silly, but when you have all these small differences across organizations, it's hard to feel like you're all on the same team.” His solution? “Anything that looked, smelled or tasted like a separate entity, we removed it.” Hence the new logo, signage and tagline (“infinitely in”).



Guidemark's revamped signage (above left) and an intuitive and cloud-based speaker arrangement system (above)

Amid all the internal change there was also client stuff. The Guidemark agencies excelled, counting among their 13 wins new work from Novartis, Cubist and Otsuka. Since the unification, Guidemark is “batting 1.000” in new-business derbies.

“My thinking was that we were going to spend the first quarter of '15 getting our story down, launch our brand in the second quarter and maybe pitch in the third. I had no idea we'd do three major pitches in March,” he adds. “I say this humbly, but I wish I wouldn't have underestimated us.”

—Larry Dobrow