

100 AGENCIES



AT THE HELM

Bill McEllen, president

PERFORMANCE

Another year of solid growth

HIGHLIGHTS

New business in 2014 included work for Eisai, Daiichi Sankyo, Actelion and AstraZeneca

Grew business with existing clients GlaxoSmithKline, Boehringer Ingelheim/Lilly and Novartis Oncology

Hired Wendy Levine as EVP, managing director

CHALLENGES

Managing the changing healthcare landscape

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

McCANN TORRE LAZUR

Launch agency keeps new-product role



Two years ago McCann Torre Lazur was in the middle of enjoying its best year ever, with revenues up 30% on the back of some notable product launches. “It was almost like the snake eating the elephant,” says president Bill McEllen. “We are still digesting that a little bit.”

Yet the agency followed that spike with another year of solid growth in 2014 (McEllen would not divulge actual numbers). What’s behind this success?

McEllen sees the value of the McCann brand coming through in healthcare. “Contrary to *Mad Men*’s depictions, McCann is a great place to work and a lot of fun,” he says, adding that an additional benefit for McCann Torre Lazur is its heritage as a launch agency. “It is the sweet spot of the agency. It is what we are known for. It’s part of our DNA.”

In fact, in 2014 McCann Torre Lazur launched one in five of all products approved by the FDA in the previous year—a truly staggering statistic.

New business in 2014 included Eisai in epilepsy, Daiichi Sankyo in pain management, Actelion in pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH) and additional DTP work from AstraZeneca. The agency also won a major new assignment from an undisclosed client for an Ebola vaccine. “Of all

the launches we have worked on, that’s a really interesting one from a marketplace dynamic,” says McEllen, adding that the assignment is in conjunction with the McCann Global Health offering.

The agency is also growing business with existing clients, including GlaxoSmithKline in respiratory, Boehringer Ingelheim/Lilly in diabetes and Novartis Oncology.

McCann Torre Lazur’s management team remains largely unchanged, with the addition of Wendy Levine, EVP, managing director, moved across from CementBloc. US head count remains at around the 200 mark.

One major initiative for 2015 is establishing a West Coast presence, where the agency recently opened a new office, in San Francisco. “It literally started with some McCann Torre Lazur people who had a desire to move west,” says McEllen, who quips, “It’s probably a climate thing. San Francisco is not a bad place.”

McEllen says that while the agency is still doing “a ton of the core creative work for which we’re known,” the changing healthcare landscape is impacting the strategic approach on a couple of fronts.

First, he sees a greater emphasis from clients on the work being done by the DTP strategy group he built, a team of health educators and behaviorists “who are thinking about patient interactions in a different way.” And second, he notes, the increasing influence of science. “We’ve always had people with rich science backgrounds and they have taken their love of science and have [increasingly] been able



Above left: So you thought you wanted to get into the ad biz? One of McCann Torre Lazur’s fun house ads. Above: Print ad for Boehringer Ingelheim/Lilly’s Tradjenta and Jentadueto

to use that in what we are doing from a communications perspective,” says McEllen, emphasizing as well the importance of being involved at an early clinical stage with product launches.

McEllen says the accelerated pace of change in industry, and clients’ thirst for more innovative approaches, has fostered a more collaborative agency/client relationship. “You have to have willing parties on both sides,” he says. “We are certainly not dragging clients into integration. They want it. It’s what they desire and it makes for good business.”

—James Chase

—BILL McELLEN