



**AT THE HELM**

Olivier Zitoun, founder and CEO

**PERFORMANCE**

Saw 97% revenue growth in 2009

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Won “22 brands of various sizes and in multiple therapeutic areas”

EvLab unit did work for Baxter, Merck and Wyeth

Headcount jumped from 80 to 150, opened up full-time NYC office

Ranked top independent digital healthcare shop (by *Advertising Age*)

**CHALLENGE**

Continuing to innovate

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see *Agency A-to-Z*, beginning on page 171

**“When other people were trying to protect themselves from the recession, we went the other way”**

—Olivier Zitoun



Independent digital shop experiences explosive growth in award-winning year

It's tough to get an accurate read on the progress of digital marketing experts Eveo. On one hand, agency sources happily share its laundry list of awards pocketed, its status as the top independent digital healthcare shop (based on revenues rankings in *Advertising Age's* 2010 agency report) and its spit-take-inducing 97% revenue growth in 2009. Combine this with outside buzz about its innovative work, and the agency comes across as a rare 2009 success story.

On the other hand, Eveo isn't eager to share details. It claims to have won “22 brands of various sizes and [in] multiple therapeutic areas” last year, but cites client sensitivity in declining to reveal more than a few brand names or assignments. Similarly, if one asks agency founder and CEO Olivier Zitoun about the recent Eveo-led programs that had the most impact, he responds, “A number of our programs are confidential.” When queried about plans for the future, he says little about, say, acquisitions or expansion, noting instead that he is “extremely pleased with the results so far” and that he “expects positive conversations.”

So it's safe to say that Eveo had an amazing year, probably, if you take their word for it. Here's what we do know: In 2009, Eveo unequivocally evolved in size and structure. Last year at this time, it boasted around 80 employees; now, it employs around 150. It opened a full-time New York City office to serve as an East Coast complement to its San Francisco headquarters, which the agency will soon abandon for larger digs. Most essentially, it remodeled itself into a four-unit communications group.

The San Francisco mothership now has the Eveo

tag all to itself, with the New York office assuming the name Evea, the medical animation/3D/augmented reality arm dubbed EvLab and the mobile unit called Ev2. The restructuring, according to Zitoun, helped the firm hurdle the obstacles that came with its growth.

“The challenge was how to preserve the entrepreneurial mindset we had when we started, at a time when we were expanding in scale,” Zitoun explains. “It was clear that within Eveo, we were starting to build capabilities so distinct that they could live on their own.” Along those lines, he adds, the new structure should help each of the units carve out a place all their own in the marketplace: “Take medical animation, for example. There are a number of agencies that do only that, so we can compete more effectively by having our own agency.”

The changes were met warmly both internally and externally. Though Zitoun notes that “any change in organization requires some communication, [employees] were excited once they understood the vision. More people in mid-level positions can see themselves moving up.”

The few new assignments Eveo is willing to disclose came courtesy of the EvLab unit: video work for Bax-



**Above: An interactive Novartis Oncology website for healthcare professionals to simulate CML rounds**

ter and Merck, an animation project for Wyeth and an interactive trade-show exhibit for Sanofi-Aventis. The agency also devised a “wall of glass” promotion for Genentech's Rituxan and “disease state animation” for Pfizer's Prevnar 13. Other companies with which Eveo worked in 2009 include Amgen, GlaxoSmith-Kline, Abbott and AstraZeneca.

Though Zitoun stops short of identifying possible areas of future expansion, it's worth noting that he enthuses about the mobile space, calling it one of the few untapped opportunities. “It's changing our world completely: How patients get their care or track their medication and how we communicate with physicians themselves,” he says. In any event, expect Eveo to dive into it, or maybe something else, without hesitation. “We never stop innovating. Maybe when other people were trying to shrink or protect themselves from the recession, we went the other way.” —Larry Dobrow