

Sales vet keeps 111-year-old title spry

When one pores over the most recent Kantar Media data chronicling advertising in medical journals (see “Professional Ad Report: Staying Power,” p. 42), the performance of certain genres tends to stand out. Infectious-disease publications, for instance, have enjoyed much advertiser affection in recent years, even as the overall trend of dollars slowly migrating away from print has continued.

Yet even within that context, the 111-year-old *Journal of Infectious Diseases* is on quite the multiyear roll. According to Kantar, ad revenue has surged from \$614,000 in 2012 to \$1,569,000 in 2014—a nearly 156% gain—and the number of ad pages jumped from 177 to 429 during the same period. Business is up in 2015 as well: During the year’s first six months it has significantly grown revenue (from \$633,000 to \$1,126,000) and pages (175.5 to 302.5) against the year-ago period.

Ordinarily a publisher or sales chief experiencing such sharp growth during a limited time frame—especially at a time when many journals are hurting—would crow about the market, the ad partners, even the positive vibe flowing through the cosmos. But to her credit, Amy Clarke Luchsinger, director of global corporate sales for *JID*’s parent entity Oxford University Press, is able to sum up her title’s success in a single word: quality.

“Our story has always been about quality. The authors writing articles for us are the on-the-ground researchers,” she explains. That quality story extends to *JID*’s subscriber base, currently numbering around 12,500. “We compete with some of the controlled-circulation journals that buy AMA lists,” Luchsinger continues. “Everybody wants to go more, more, more, but what we can say is that our subscriber list doesn’t include anybody who may not want a journal. It’s a highly qualified list of healthcare providers in this discipline.”

Luchsinger, a medical-publishing vet who held marketing and sales posts at entities like Wolters Kluwer before arriving at Oxford in 2012, clearly doesn’t take *JID*’s recent suc-

Amy Clarke Luchsinger

2012–present
Director, global sales,
Oxford University Press

2010–2012
VP, Society Business
Development

2004–2010
SVP, Quadrant
Health Care

cesses for granted. She acknowledges that scientific advances within the infectious-diseases sector have spurred marketer interest in *JID* and competing titles (“Antibiotic resistance is in the news every day. HIV and HCV—same thing”) and that major-league drug launches of the sort recently seen in the category certainly don’t hurt. Left unsaid is that comparable advances in other categories, oncology excepted, don’t seem to have given an across-the-board lift to journals covering those therapeutic areas.

Indeed, when one asks publishers and industry observers about *JID*, the most frequently repeated refrains focus on editor in chief Martin Hirsch (“brilliant” and “principled”) and the rigorous peer-review process fueled in large part by *JID*’s status as the official journal of the Infectious Diseases Society of America. Observers, especially on the marketing side, also point to the publication’s willingness and flexibility to work on nontraditional programs.

This isn’t a coincidence. Luchsinger credits IDSA with encouraging the publication to explore such avenues. “Scientific journals tend to be conservative in terms of the advertising they allow. It’s rare that you see ads in the middle of the content,” she notes. “The IDSA has expanded our ability to sell different positions and different types of advertising.”

This has had the effect of helping *JID* stand out even further in a crowded category, just as the addition of digital options have made the publication a more viable venue for certain marketers. “If there is a category of advertiser that’s traditionally low-spend or no-spend, we now have so many ideas and possibilities for them. They don’t have to run a six-page spread,” Luchsinger says.

Which isn’t to say that *JID* will throw all its weight behind digital anytime soon. While she thinks that the publication and its subject matter “translate really well to a digital format,” Luchsinger says that physicians’ preference for digital may have been overstated. “I think healthcare providers want both print and digital. The people we talk with just want to be able to access information when and where they want to access it. A lot of the time that still means carrying a journal in a briefcase.”

—Larry Dobrow

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