



#### AT THE HELM

Marcia McLaughlin, CEO,  
and Michael Metelenis,  
chief creative officer

#### PERFORMANCE

Revenue up 50% in 2010  
to \$22 million

#### HIGHLIGHTS

Grew organically with  
Acorda, Dey and  
Eisai; and new work from  
CareFusion and Genzyme

Added med ed business  
from AstraZeneca, DSI  
and OraPharm

Headcount up 10 to 85

#### CHALLENGES

Network consolidation

Tighter budgets and  
shrinking sales forces

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

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and content, the  
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—Marcia McLaughlin

# Centron

Six-year-old shop bypasses \$20 million  
mark with outstanding revenue growth



**O**ver the last several years, six-year-old Centron has experienced astounding growth—and it just keeps coming. Revenue increased more than 50% to top \$22 million in 2010. Even president and CEO Marcia McLaughlin feels like she needs to pinch herself.

“We surpassed where any of us ever thought we’d be by this point,” she says. “That we’ve grown to this size in six years I think is unprecedented. It just proves that when you get the right group of talent together, they can make magic.”

Though Centron had a fantastic growth year, McLaughlin says clients have trimmed budgets, they’re much more focused on proven ROI, and sales forces are definitely shrinking.

“The greatest challenge is pressure on budgets,” she says. “Clients are asking us to be smarter about how we approach promotional opportunities. It hasn’t limited our business, but it’s changing the way we think and the kinds of things we do.”

Clients are also asking for more strategic planning before phase III trials. And reduced workforces mean they routinely need agency support.

“They have far fewer full-time employees,” she explains. “I have people spending three days a week onsite at client offices, and they’re doing more product management work. It’s the best thing for the relationship. Combined with us getting involved earlier to help

set the tone of where they take a brand, it creates a truly collaborative extended brand team.”

McLaughlin also stresses the value of seeking pure strategic consultant opportunities. For example, Centron created an exciting patient documentary for Vertex to help ensure treatment for all eligible Hep C patients.

“If you’re out talking to customers about what’s keeping them up at night, and you put some time into solving it you can come up with some great ideas,” she says. “Just because I’m not doing traditional ad materials doesn’t mean I’m not helping them sell the brand. I think there are a lot more opportunities out there like that.”

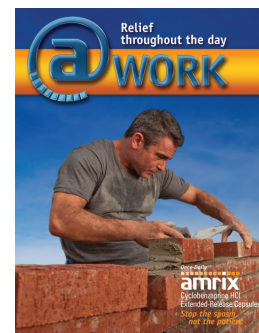
Existing clients Acorda, Dey and Eisai significantly expanded assignments last year. Brand new wins included CareFusion’s Chloraprep (preoperative antimicrobial); Genzyme’s Renagel/Renvela (chronic kidney disease); and two products from Seaside Therapeutics (autism and fragile X syndrome).

Already this year Centron won medical education business for AstraZeneca, DSI and OraPharma.

Agency consolidation claimed Millennium’s Velcade and Strativa Pharmaceuticals’ Nascobal. Lundbeck’s depression franchise was resigned.

Ten employees joined Centron in 2010, bringing headcount up to 85. They included Dan Simon, EVP, creative director, and Brian Schwartz, SVP, director of operations. Joyce Griggs recently joined from GHG as EVP, managing director of medical education.

While digital is key to all clients and is always part



**Above: Journal ads for Dey’s EpiPen (left) and Cephalon’s Amrix (right); top: From an Eisai Oncology ad**

of the total plan, McLaughlin says it’s just another medium. “Content is king,” she adds. “If you provide strong, smart strategy and content, the way in which it’s accessed is really secondary.”

Though continued network consolidation is a challenge, McLaughlin sees the pendulum swinging a bit.

“It’s both the challenge and the reason to continue doing what we’ve done all along,” she says. “One or two years post-consolidation, many clients are going back to the smaller strategic agencies that provided them the senior level talent they need. So it’s important for us to continue to provide the senior level attention we’ve always provided—in the end, that’s what will bode well for us.” —Tanya Lewis