



AT THE HELM

Principals Steve Witt, Helen Appelbaum, Charlene Prounis and Steve Frederick

PERFORMANCE

Revenue up just under 5% in 2010

HIGHLIGHTS

Launched four brands

Landed 12 pieces of new business, including Genentech's Tarceva

Implementing 10 SVPs to manage business

Headcount up 5 to 75 at end of 2010

CHALLENGE

Regulatory scrutiny and the Sunshine Act

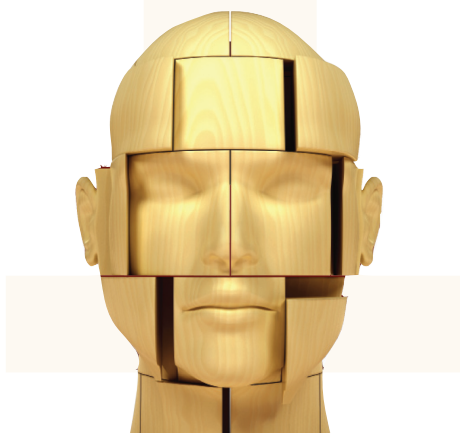
For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 169

"There are partners on every account so we can bring the big ideas. We're committed to that"

—Charlene Prounis

Flashpoint Medica

Focused on managing growth, following double-digit gains in 2009



After a 53% jump in revenue in 2009, last year was about managing growth for Flashpoint Medica, a member of Omnicom Diversified Agency Services. Revenue ending 2010 was up just under 5%. The agency made significant investments in senior talent, launched four brands and landed some big new accounts, including Genentech's anti-cancer agent Tarceva.

"We managed growth and did really well," says managing partner and president Charlene Prounis. "In a tough economy where everyone was worried about brand budget cuts, we didn't have big budget cuts."

This spring, co-president and managing partner Risa Bernstein resigned to spend more time with her family. Agency leaders last year began planning for a senior management team of 10 SVPs to help manage Flashpoint across account, creative, medical education, digital strategies and operations. It was formed this year. Joining as SVP, group account supervisors were Margaret Ingram and Hoon Chang. Baron Landaw came aboard as SVP, strategy planning.

Headcount was up about five to 75 ending 2010. The agency opened a second office in SoHo to accommodate its growing Flashlight (digital) and Lumenon (med ed) divisions. There are currently about 10 openings, including mid-level account and copywriter

positions. Prounis says copywriters are tough to find, particularly in oncology and high science.

Flashpoint racked up 12 wins last year. Additional Genentech business included a new managed care assignment and a patient education website. BioVex awarded OncoVex (oncolytic immunotherapy). Amgen acquired BioVex in April, and the business has been retained. Other new clients included LifeCell, Angiotech, Crescendo and NPS Pharmaceuticals.

Work with J&J expanded to include the EES bariatric and metabolic portfolio from J&J/Ethicon Endo Surgery, and Biosense Webster awarded multiple products.

Two accounts were lost. J&J selected a new agency for Cordis and a management change claimed Endo's Supprelin and Valstar.

Client challenges include regulatory scrutiny and the Sunshine Act. Prounis says the agency is devising exciting new rep programs.

Among agency side challenges, Prounis notes pitches are increasingly competitive and expensive (often with six agencies involved). Procurement is also wielding a lot of power. One piece of business was recently lost to procurement challenges. "The contract was onerous in terms of indemnification and warranty clauses," Prounis explains. "They didn't even give us a chance to come to terms. We didn't even get a phone call. It's strange that procurement could have so much say."

Prounis sees the needs of big pharma companies



Above: A professional campaign for Angiotech's Quill; Top: Part of a journal ad for LifeCell's AlloDerm

changing as their business is changing. "Specialty and digital are new shifts," Prounis notes. "It's a big change from 100,000 sales reps selling cholesterol drugs. There's also 'the rise of the payer,' and patients are maintaining their level of importance. We're after the HCP, the payer and the patient—we must have expertise in those three areas."

Prounis will continue to invest in digital, and she's excited about bringing the strength of the senior management team to bear on all business this year. Revenue is projected to end up about 10%.

"It's important to foster idea generation and debate with the client and us at the table," she adds. "There are partners on every account so we can bring the big ideas. We're committed to that." —Tanya Lewis