



AT THE HELM

Wendy Blackburn, EVP;
Faruk Capan, CEO; and
Pat McNerney, EVP

PERFORMANCE

Revenue up 37% in 2010 to nearly \$30.7 million (428% growth over the past five years)

HIGHLIGHTS

Landed 19 new accounts in 2010, with many existing clients, including work from Abbott and Sanofi

Became inaugural content provider for Veeva's iRep

Headcount up nearly 150% since 2008

CHALLENGES

Maintaining momentum and staying independent

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

Intouch Solutions

Explosive revenue and staff growth propel sought-after independent shop



Faruk Capan founded Intouch Solutions in Overland Park, KS, in 1999 because he wanted to blend technology and marketing to help pharma companies solve problems. Growing every year since, the agency has gained tremendous momentum. Revenue skyrocketed 61% in 2009, and it climbed another 37% in 2010 to nearly \$30.7 million (428% growth over the past five years). Not surprisingly, there have been more than a few buyout offers.

“We’re not for sale,” Capan says. “We want to be independent. We’re onto something really good, really positive.”

Capan considers innovation an “essential and ongoing requirement” and notes the digital share of the marketing pie is increasing even as limited resources, fewer products and the conservative regulatory environment challenge pharma. He views the rapidly evolving digital landscape as an advantage.

“It’s just going to constantly change,” he says. “Companies that can adjust and add value are going to stand out. It’s our mission to have a keen understanding of where marketing is going, and chart the course to get Intouch and its clients there first.”

Developing innovations—tools, products, ideas

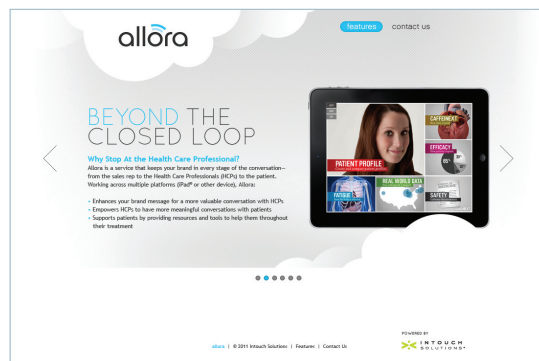
—that Capan says are “truly unique” and “not superficial” has differentiated Intouch and fueled its growth. New products include ShareSendSave, a social sharing widget; Pharma Wall, a Facebook moderation tool; and Tweetpharm, a free widget that tracks pharma’s Twitter use. The agency also launched Allora, an iPad mobile marketing platform, which Capan describes as “beyond closed-loop marketing,” adding that it has attracted enormous interest both in the US and abroad.

In terms of industry trends, Capan says social media and mobile have highlighted the need for a customer-centric approach, and he sees a trend towards value-based marketing.

“We need to do more than just push out marketing messages,” he explains. “We need to create things patients or doctors would like to have. Social media has really made us think even more—we can’t just talk about drugs on social media. We’ve got to listen and learn and engage in two-way communication.”

The agency landed 19 new accounts in 2010. Many existing clients, including Abbott and Sanofi, awarded multiple additional brand projects. New business wins included Galderma’s skin cleanser Cetaphil and a patient support program for Medtronic. Early this year, Intouch became the inaugural content provider for Veeva’s iRep product.

Fifty-five new employees joined last year, bringing headcount up to 240—a jump of nearly 150% over 2008. Kansas and Chicago offices were expanded, and an office will open in New York City this summer with a staff of 10 to 15 to start. Capan is clearly very



Above: An iPad mobile marketing platform, Allora; Top: Sanofi’s GoMeals application for the iPad

committed to the agency’s culture, and EVP Wendy Blackburn says he really drives it.

New hires in 2010 included David Windhausen, SVP leading development services, and Jill Groebl, VP, client services. A director of user experience and an HR director also joined.

Business is expected to continue trending up, and Capan says clients are increasingly looking on Intouch as more of a business partner than a marketing agency. “We’re a sincere, honest partner,” he adds. “We tell clients if we don’t think something will help them, and we look for what will. I think that helps us stay in relationships. They don’t see us as slick agency guys.”

—Tanya Lewis

“We tell clients if we don’t think something will help them, and we look for what will”

—Faruk Capan