



**AT THE HELM**

Mike Myers, president, and Guy Mastrion, chief global creative officer

**PERFORMANCE**

In a strong, competitive position

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Picked up 24 accounts in the last year, including wins from Gilead Sciences (HIV franchise), Teva (oncology and palliative care) and Epocrates (EHR)

Headcount up to 128, with new office space added on its campus

Re-engineered internal process

**CHALLENGE**

Lost two accounts

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

**“Digital went from ‘Hmm, I’m not sure,’ to ‘I need it six minutes ago and it better be on an iPad’”**

—Mike Myers

# Palio

12-year-old shop rebounds from challenging year with 24 accounts

Over the course of the last half-decade, Palio president Mike Myers has proven himself a straight shooter during his annual sit-down with *MM&M*. In 2007, he spoke of the challenges of competing from afar (the firm’s home base is in Saratoga Springs, NY). In 2010, he reported that Palio had “stutter-stepped” during the economic downturn and spoke candidly about the adoption of a do-more-with-less attitude.

So, he’s the rare agency prexy who can be taken at his word when he says that, as of late-May, his firm finds itself in the strongest competitive position of its 12-year history. “You’ve interviewed me enough to know I don’t always say stuff like that,” Myers says. “It’s not because revenue is up and new and organic business are strong, even though they are. It’s because we have a more diversified base of business and because of the strength of our talent.”

Specifically, Myers and chief global creative officer Guy Mastrion tout the investments Palio has made over the last several years in two areas: digital and managed care. By getting a jump on the competition, they believe, the firm established a level of credibility that late entrants to the digital and managed-care games lack.

At the same time, Palio spent much of 2010 re-engineering its internal processes to better line up with

client needs and expectations. Teams were rebuilt around new-media skills and personnel was quickly added to fill any and all gaps. To that end, last year Palio reported a headcount of 100, give or take a few staffers; this year, the firm sits at 128. To accommodate the growth, it added office space on its campus.

There were other growing pains. “In the spirit of continuing to be transparent with you, it hasn’t been easy,” Mastrion says. “Most [Palio staffers] have flocked to the change, but some have been indifferent and some want nothing to do with it.”

Clients responded in kind to the renewed vigor, sometimes to an extent that threw Palio for a loop. “You know how it is: People go from not realizing that electricity can fill these things called light bulbs to ‘we want electricity all the time,’” Myers jokes. “That’s how it’s been with digital. It went from, ‘Hmm, I’m not sure’ to ‘I need it six minutes ago and it better be on an iPad.’”

Palio responded deftly to the demands. The agency picked up 24 accounts over the last year against only two losses (Prometheus’ cancer drug Proleukin and a local hospital account). Wins included Gilead Sciences’



Expressing emotions shouldn't be left to chance

- People with pseudobulbar affect (PBA) suffer sudden, involuntary outbursts of crying or laughing throughout their day
- PBA can occur in people with an underlying neurologic condition—such as Lou Gehrig’s disease (ALS), multiple sclerosis (MS), stroke, or traumatic brain injury
- Though it may sometimes seem like it, a person with PBA is not alone. More than a million Americans suffer from the condition

If you or someone you care for shows signs of having PBA, talk to your doctor or visit [PBAinfo.org](http://PBAinfo.org). You can also share your PBA experiences at [facebook.com/PBAinfo](https://www.facebook.com/PBAinfo)

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**Above: A disease state awareness ad from Avanis for PBA (pseudobulbar affect), a neurologic condition**

HIV franchise, oncology and palliative care products from Teva Pharmaceutical (“some people are saying they’ll be the largest pharmaceutical company in the world by 2020”) and Epocrates for an EHR system (“they were digital before digital was cool”).

Geographic expansion could come next, but the item atop the to-do list is, basically, staying the course, especially as it pertains to digital. “Next year digital won’t be on that list,” Mastrion says. “It’ll just be ‘this is just a regular part of what we do.’” —Larry Dobrow