



AT THE HELM

Scott Cotherman (CEO) at left, with CAHG's executive staff

PERFORMANCE

"Business is way up" as a result of TBWA pact

HIGHLIGHTS

Won account for Gilead's GS-7977 anti-viral for hep. C

Also got global AOR for Abilify Maintena and BMS's rheumatoid arthritis shot Orencia

Awarded interactive work for Otsuka's leukemia med busulfex

CHALLENGES

Still coming back from Merck losses

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 181

CAHG

Despite Merck losses, agency wins with TBWA pact and hep. C agent



CAHG looks spry for an agency marking its Golden Anniversary. It formalized a partnership with the TBWA/WorldHealth Network, also part of Omnicom, to be the network's lead healthcare professional agency in the US. It also notched several assignments, including a highly anticipated hepatitis C product from new client Gilead. But it lost a fair amount of Merck business to consolidation.

Asked how the agency has performed the last 12 months, Scott Cotherman, network chairman and CAHG CEO, says the TBWA pact, announced in March, changed everything. "Any comparisons to the prior year are out the window. In general, our business is way up as a result." Headcount wise, "We're sort of off the charts now." Reach now encompasses the new partner's 36 countries and major regional hub offices, such as those in Singapore, Hamburg, Paris and London, and CAHG's professional focus is bridged with that of TBWA's largely consumer-oriented outreach.

Consistent with this, CAHG has organized talent and services around disease states. It follows the decision to collapse individual unit names and conflict shops, in essence committing to conflict-free relationships. "There's plenty of opportunity in the broad healthcare industry for us to expand," says Cotherman.

Among new business, Gilead's GS-7977 direct-acting

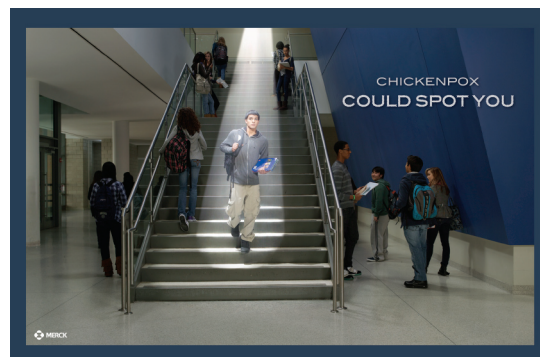
antiviral for treating hep. C, in Phase III, is among several all-oral investigational agents vying to replace injected interferon. The agency also became the global and US AOR for Abilify Maintena, an intramuscular depot formulation of Bristol-Myers Squibb's popular CNS brand. FDA advisors issued a thumbs-up earlier this year, and a final decision by the agency is expected July 26, after which Otsuka and promotion partner Lundbeck stand ready to launch.

In the meantime, CAHG is managing both brands, and despite the 2015 patent cliff for the pill version, "BMS and Otsuka are still very, very committed to Abilify oral and continue to put very strong resources behind the brand," he says.

It also won global AOR for BMS rheumatoid arthritis shot Orencia, plus two Shire orphan brands, Replagal and VPRIV for treating metabolic disorders. With TBWA/WorldHealth, the agency won Restylane from Q-Med, a Galderma division, and a number of unnamed products for Hospira.

The clinical-trials practice added Alcon products Durezol and Rejena, (ocular disorders) and picked up assignments from Theravance for GB-1211 (opioid-induced constipation) and arbaclofen (muscle spasticity in MS). In addition to a lot of work in the area of iPad app development and field promotions, Otsuka awarded interactive work for busulfex (leukemia).

All of that is starting to offset some of the Merck business that the agency has lost. "It wasn't for performance reasons," says Cotherman of the lost accounts. The agency's recent work for the drugmaker had included the launching of Victrelis for hep. C.



CAHG work for pink-eye medication Moxeza (above left) and Varivax chicken-pox vaccine (above)

The agency also continues to invest in its personalized healthcare practice area. Aside from 2011's BioMerieux/Philips engagement on a molecular diagnostic, "We're well ahead of the marketplace's readiness to commit to dollars in this area," says Cotherman. Together with Omnicom med-ed shop Adelphi, CAHG is fielding a personalized medicine perception study in Europe, to build on one it did in the US.

CAHG is seeing more emphasis on digital across all clients, and last year it became the nation's first healthcare communications agency to be fully certified in compliance, something he calls "a key differentiator for us." — Marc Iskowitz

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—Scott Cotherman