



AT THE HELM

Patty Henhoeffer,
managing director

PERFORMANCE

First three quarters
of 2011 were “pretty
difficult”

HIGHLIGHTS

Scored major account
wins from Bausch +
Lomb and others

Increased headcount
from 35 to 40

Saw results from
aggressive approach
and new positioning

CHALLENGES

McNeil Consumer
Healthcare production
problems affected the
agency

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

DiD

Philadelphia-area firm makes some noise without tooting its own horn

Despite the chorus of agency chieftains rhapsodizing about the virtues of “keeping under the radar” and “letting the work speak for itself,” it’s not really all that easy to find firms who practice what those chieftains preach. Actually maintaining a low profile and refraining from profound and relentless acts of self-promotion within and without the industry? Few firms walk that particular walk.

Which is what makes DiD, a boutique firm stationed north of Philadelphia, such an interesting case. Though it has a stellar rep among clients, news about the agency and its people is hard to come by, even in the age of Internets and Googles and whatnot. “This will be the first time we kind of pop ourselves up for air,” says DiD cofounder and partner Peter Kenney. “But it feels like we’re reaching our maturity. It feels like we’ve arrived at a place where we can talk a little about the breadth of our offerings.”

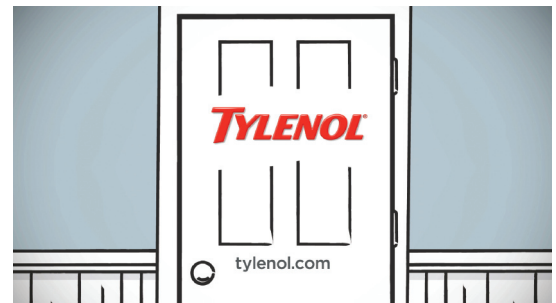
So just who/what is this mysterious firm? Founded in 2004, DiD has occupied a nice little niche for most of its lifespan, marketing products to healthcare professionals in the over-the-counter vision and dental spaces. In recent years, however, the firm has expanded its charge, now sometimes cutting out the middleman and targeting consumers directly. “Being of a certain size and selectivity, we passed on some opportunities because they didn’t fit our perception of who we were,” Kenney explains.

That perception took a hit during the first three quarters of 2011, which Kenney describes as having been a “pretty difficult” period. Among other small blows, DiD saw production issues hobble some of the McNeil Consumer Healthcare products upon which it was working. “We feel the pain that our clients feel. Those production problems were a real blow to some of the things we were doing,” he admits. That slowdown, however, gave birth to

the agency’s newfound aggressiveness and slightly tweaked positioning. “We had to start following the opportunities where they took us. We had to blow away some of the self-perceptions that we were holding onto,” Kenney adds.

The turnaround commenced almost immediately, with DiD scoring several wins in both familiar and unfamiliar categories. Bausch + Lomb hired the firm as its AOR for professional marketing (Johnson & Johnson’s Acuvue brand lenses had been a longtime DiD client until a dreaded bout of agency consolidation), while McNeil tapped the firm for a series of consumer-facing health videos (including House Calls by Tylenol, a lightly branded series of information-first clips). Other additions included WellSpring Pharmaceutical, described by Kenney as “a fast-growing private equity group buying OTC products”; Nutrasystem, for marketing to diabetes patients; and Biomers, the manufacturer of SimpliClear braces.

The new-business surge prompted DiD to increase its head count from 35 to 40. While the firm expects



McNeil engaged DiD to work on the House Calls series of information-first videos for Tylenol

more hires in the months ahead—five or six more staffers by the end of 2012, plus a jump into the 50–60 range by this time next year—DiD hopes to grow “smartly and deliberately,” according to managing director Patty Henhoeffer. While several DiD staffers worked at Medical Broadcasting Company in its pre-Digitas days, the firm is intent on maintaining a small-firm atmosphere and feel. “There’s no magic number, in terms of head count, but we want to maintain that family-like environment,” she says.

Over the course of the next year or so, DiD hopes to expand its category base, ideally by adding a skin-care product to its portfolio. Kenney’s wish list also includes another dental product in the consumer space. —Larry Dobrow

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