



AT THE HELM

From left: Steve Frederick (EVP, Creative Director), Charlene Prounis (CEO & Managing Partner), Steve Witt (SVP, Creative Director) and Helen Appelbaum (President & Partner)

PERFORMANCE

Between \$15 million and \$20 million in 2011 revenues

HIGHLIGHTS

Brought home 21 creative awards

Named AOR (in collaboration with LLNS) for Novartis's Afinitor

CHALLENGES

Lost Herceptin and Gattex accounts

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"It's no longer just creative concepts, it's about engaging physicians creatively"

—Charlene Prounis

Flashpoint Medica

Focusing on the future by making "digital is inbred" a company motto

For Omnicom Diversified Agency Services' Flashpoint Medica, a restructuring last year was a way to adapt to digital demands. CEO and managing partner Charlene Prounis reports revenue held steady (between \$15 million and \$20 million).

"It was a year of change and focus on digital transformation," she explains. "We're now a multichannel digital agency, with digital accounting for 40% of revenue. Our operations department is very different than it was a year ago—it's consolidated around project management structure. While we only grew a little in 2011, we did smart things internally to set us up for future success. And we did work we're very proud of—we won 21 creative awards, and that's a big deal."

Significant training investment was made to ensure that "digital is inbred" throughout the agency. Joining their senior talent roster was Nicole Johnson, SVP, director of digital strategy, who Prounis says has helped with the transformation. Yaron Landow was also hired last year as SVP, director of strategic planning. Partner Helen Appelbaum was named president.

Overall, there was no change in headcount (about 75). Prounis says it's still hard to find talented copywriters, particularly in oncology.

One of last year's highlights was winning AOR for professional, global and US work on all four indications of Novartis's Afinitor in collaboration with Omnicom sibling LLNS.

The Afinitor win also eased the sting of the loss of Genentech's breast cancer drug Herceptin due to management changes.

"That was a bit of a heartache because it was a long-term client, but we had all that talent to put on Afinitor, so it worked out nicely," Prounis says of the Herceptin loss.

Genentech also awarded new business—AOR status for medical marketing on its rheumatoid arthritis treatment Actemra. Work expanded for Crescendo

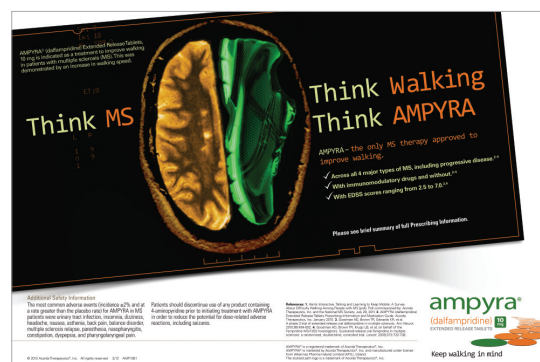
Bioscience's rheumatoid arthritis blood test Vectra DA to include AOR for DTP. Other new business included medical marketing project work for Gilead's HIV franchise; a launch for LifeCell's SPY Elite (wound healing); and corporate branding work for Geistlich.

The agency parted ways with device company BioSense Webster, and work on NPS Pharmaceuticals' Gattex was lost due to new management.

Prounis says the agency is ramping up expertise in non-personal promotion and metrics, as well as in promotional educational work, and adds that engaging on digital channels is key to both.

"It's a big change for us in the way we look at creative," she says. "The definition has changed. It's no longer just creative concepts, it's about engaging physicians creatively. You have to bring in the right digital talent to help you get there and train the talent that you have."

Prounis felt FDA approvals were a little better last year. Additional ongoing industry challenges



Campaigns for the breast-cancer drug Avastin (top) and multiple sclerosis drug Ampyra (above)

include the increasing importance of payer audiences, increased scrutiny on scientific dissemination and scientific exchange, and the anticipated release of comparative effectiveness research studies that will challenge brands to defend themselves.

New branding rolled out in March this year that highlights the agency's personality. And Prounis reports that Flashpoint was one of six agencies chosen by Adobe to develop an iPad DPS platform that will significantly reduce programming time.

Revenue is up this year about 5%, and that trend is expected to continue. —Tanya Lewis