



AT THE HELM

Steven Gold, principal

PERFORMANCE

Revenue grew 33% to over \$17 million

HIGHLIGHTS

New business wins from Genentech, Gilead and Edwards Lifesciences

Digital continued steady growth across all sectors of agency business

Increased agency headcount and doubled its office space

CHALLENGES

Dealing with the problems caused by an increasingly risk-averse regulatory environment

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

Giant Creative Strategy

San Francisco shop lives up to its name by having a very big year



Getting bigger is what San Francisco shop Giant Creative Strategy keeps on doing. Last year, 10 new brands were added to the agency's roster, more than 30 new employees joined and revenue jumped 33% to just over \$17 million.

"The agency turned 10 in April 2012," says principal Steven Gold. "We view the past year as a great way to end the first decade and start the next with growth in both size and revenue. We made significant investment in talent and in our space—we moved to a new office that's about twice as big."

SVP management supervisor Adam Gelling was promoted to agency principal last year, bringing the number of principals up to five.

Digital, which is fully integrated across all business, represented about 20% of 2011 revenue. Gold estimates it'll hit 40% or 45% ending 2012.

"It's hard to put numbers on it because so much of it's integrated," he says. "Clients, ones that have come to us in the last year or two are spending more than 50% of their money with us on strategy and creative programs that are implemented digitally."

The agency invested in strengthening its offerings in terms of strategy and execution. Joining up were Jonathan Peischl, SVP director of innovation and digital marketing, and Nellie Newman, VP digital services.

New business wins included a domestic professional AOR win for Genentech's Lucentis (wet AMD, RVO); domestic professional interactive work on several projects for Gilead's Viread (HBV); and a domestic and global professional AOR assignment for Edwards Lifesciences' Sapien transcatheter heart valve.

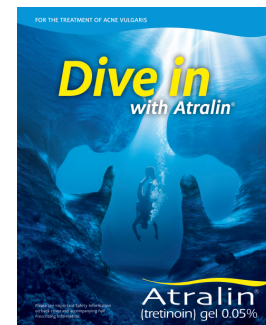
Work on Amgen's G-CSF Franchise for febrile neutropenia expanded from traditional AOR to include domestic professional interactive/digital AOR. The agency also pitched and won domestic professional AOR status for two herpes brands from existing client Valeant Dermatology.

Professional project assignments were pitched, won and completed for Ulthera's Ultherapy (skin contouring/tightening); Covidien's Vascular Therapies/Vein Ablation; and Aria Diagnostics' prenatal test for fetal trisomies. Global professional project work for Roche Molecular Systems' Cobas (HPV diagnostic) was also pitched and won, and it's nearly complete.

Early this year the agency won domestic and professional AOR status for a prostate cancer drug launch from Astellas/Medivation.

Gold notes a trend to larger brands and more integrated programs. "Our competition now is the big agencies," he says. "We competed against big, major network agencies and won Genentech, Astellas and Amgen."

Total headcount was up from 68 to about 100 (it's approaching 115 now). Additional 2011 senior hires included SVPs Paul Hagopian, managing group director, and Adena Svingos, PhD, medical director.



From top left: Giant work for Edwards Lifesciences, Actelion's PAH awareness effort and Atralin

"Hiring is a major challenge," Gold says. "It was little harder maybe than the previous year. Finding strong senior leadership is always a challenge, and we've been fortunate that we've found them."

Among industry challenges, Gold cites the changing role of the sales rep, an increasingly risk adverse legal and regulatory environment, and blurring of lines between professional and consumer/patient communication.

Focus now is on a number of pitches and launches. In addition to the new Astellas/Medivation business, the agency also landed an integrated patient and professional engagement program for an asthma control outpatient procedure from Boston Scientific. Gold expects 2012 growth to exceed 20%. —Tanya Lewis

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