



AT THE HELM

Ty Curran, CEO

PERFORMANCE

Business is “significantly up”

HIGHLIGHTS

Major executive-suite shuffles (Mardene Miller to president, Curran to CEO, Larry Star to step down)

New work from Merck and its Januvia diabetes and oncology franchises

Seeing big gains in digital work

CHALLENGES

Maintaining support for the multichannel marketing approach

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

Harrison & Star

New president, outgoing chairman and more growth for specialty shop



Harrison & Star’s succession plan continues. In March the Omnicom shop promoted Mardene Miller to president, from SVP/managing director. The 14-year H&S veteran assumes day-to-day operations from Ty Curran, who’s held the post the last eight years and now vaults to CEO, in addition to acting as chief executive of sister shop BioLumina. “I’ll be taking more of an internal-focused role,” Curran explains.

The other big managerial change involves the agency’s co-founder Larry Star, who last year handed over the managerial reins to Curran and became chairman. He’s due to step down from that position at year’s end. Curran says of Star, “He’s still on the executive leadership committee and will still be involved from a strategic and vision standpoint.”

Besides getting credit for starting H&S with Tom Harrison back in 1986, Star’s also the one who established the agency’s specialty focus about a decade ago. Both shops have stayed busy servicing, and winning business from, such clients. Curran says business is “significantly up” in the 12 months to May and headcount has risen at each office.

First, the shops gained work from a new client—Merck and its Januvia diabetes and oncology franchises—after other agencies were displaced by a holding

company consolidation. The 330-strong H&S also won launch duties for two Bausch & Lomb ocular products, as well as for a new ulcerative colitis treatment from Santarus. Roche and the Swiss firm’s Genentech unit, both mainstays, required significant professional work during the year—a new campaign for oncology blockbuster Avastin; creative for the Zelboraf targeted melanoma treatment which was approved in 2011; pre-launch work for Erivedge, the drug approved in January 2012 for treating basal cell carcinoma; and a campaign for Activase for stroke. Novartis oncology, another existing client, had H&S create iPad selling tools for oncology drugs Gleevec and Tasigna.

“Our iPad work has grown exponentially,” Curran says. “A large part of that has been our commitment to training everybody in the agency on their digital skills, on the multichannel approach.” The agency, he says, has made a big commitment to that approach, “and I think we’re reaping the benefits.”

His crew rounded out the year managing a new campaign for Lucentis (Novartis) retinal indications; handling the US launch work for Incyte’s Jakafi, a drug approved in late 2011 for myelofibrosis; and juggling work for Bayer hemophilia drug Kogenate and OTC brands Aleve and Bayer Aspirin.

The 100-person BioLumina picked up a few new accounts of its own as well: the US and global assignment for kidney cancer agent tivozanib (Aveo/Astellas); the aforementioned Merck oncology franchise, which consists of Emend, Intron A, Sylatron, Temodar and Zolanza, as well as ridaforolimus and other pipeline candidates; and new work from Morphotek and from the Eisai oncology pipeline.



A growing concern: Harrison & Star’s work for Gleevec (above left) and Genentech (above)

As Miller settles into her new role, Curran says priorities are to maintain and improve agency culture, continue focus on people and training (which he calls his greatest achievement the past year), and maintain support for the multichannel marketing approach.

The agency is also taking a sophisticated approach to measuring the effectiveness of communications, with CRM “baked into” all campaigns. “Our clients are demanding that,” Curran says, adding that the agency’s other great challenge has been “physician access and trying to figure out the best way to get our story to our expanding customer base.” —*Marc Iskowitz*

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—Ty Curran