



**AT THE HELM**

From left: Executive team members Jennifer Campanaro, Janelle Starr, Nadine Leonard, Bill Drummy, Lee Slovitt, James Talerico

**PERFORMANCE**

Revenue increased 20%

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Awards for “Low T Facts” campaign

Prepared opening of Heartbeat West in Santa Monica, California

Added business from J&J, Bausch + Lomb, Medtronic and Pfizer

**CHALLENGES**

Lost Merck’s Nuvaring account

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

# Heartbeat Ideas

Gaining a strategic advantage by moving past a digital-only rep



**H**earbeat Ideas had a very big year in 2011. Revenue at the New York-headquartered agency increased 20%, five executive management team members became partners in the business, and, in January of this year, conflict shop Heartbeat West officially opened in Santa Monica.

CEO Bill Drummy says making his most senior people partners in the agency was key to its future growth. “I wanted them to feel real ownership and make sure they were incentivized to grow with the long-term health of the company,” he explains.

Janelle Starr, who was named partner and GM of Heartbeat West, leads a team of 15 in the California office. Overall headcount was up from 72 to 90 ending 2011.

The goals of rebranding Heartbeat Digital to Heartbeat Ideas in 2010 included shedding the perception that the agency was digital-only (it wasn’t) and attracting more AOR work. Starr says that effort really came to fruition last year with a number of AOR wins, including assignments on multiple Galderma brands.

Teva / Cephalon awarded a digital AOR designation for a prelaunch brand, plus mobile project work on three other brands. Additional wins included Johnson & Johnson (digital work); Medtronic and Pfizer

(mobile strategy); and Bausch + Lomb (project work on eye care brands).

Relationships with Amgen, Auxilium, Procure, Sanofi, and St. Francis Heart Center all expanded as well. Work for BTG was completed. Merck’s Nuvaring was lost to agency consolidation.

Mobile has been “exploding,” and Drummy is really proud of the agency’s work across the board. Among last year’s highlights, he counts numerous awards for Auxilium’s “Low-T Facts” campaign.

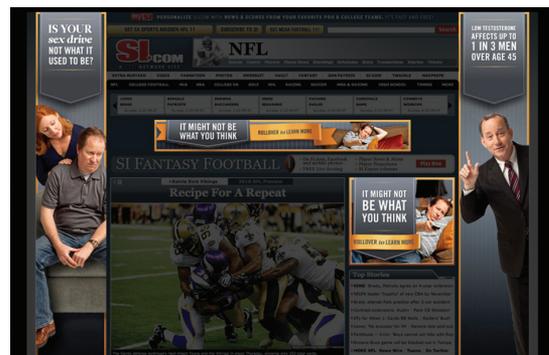
While the rebranding is paying off, reintroducing the agency to existing clients continued to be a challenge. “Sometimes it’s easier with new clients because they don’t have a preconceived notion,” Drummy notes.

Tight client budgets were a bit of a challenge last year. And Drummy says that, as always, it can be tough to tell clients things that they might not want to hear.

“Sometimes clients ask us to do something and we don’t feel like it’s the right way to go,” he explains. “Several clients have asked us to take an existing sales aid, turn it into a PDF, and throw it on the iPad. We said no because it’s not a strategic use of the technology. That’s not always easy, but in the long run you show the client you stand for something and you’re not just revenue whores. Being honest makes a huge difference in the long term, but it can mean being uncomfortable in the short term.”

Drummy feels finding talent is always challenging. He says “running a real meritocracy” helps, as does looking beyond obvious pools to find good people.

“We’ve been very fortunate in level of technical talent for doing iPad work that we’ve attracted,” he adds.



An iPad presentation for Sientra (above left) and work for Auxilium’s Low-T Facts campaign (above)

“They’re hard to find, and everyone wants them. That’s where the agency’s culture becomes so important. You have to commit to cultural integrity and invest in it. Giving people opportunity to grow is really vital.”

Starr points out that demand for Drummy on the speaking circuit is greater than ever.

“He continued presenting his bold and controversial views both at conferences and in pharma boardrooms, educating executive teams at several top 10 pharma companies on digital innovation and its impact on healthcare,” Starr says.

This year is shaping to be another good one, with about 25% growth expected. — Tanya Lewis

**“You have to commit to cultural integrity and invest in it”**

—Bill Drummy