



AT THE HELM

Stephen Wray, CEO

PERFORMANCE

Revenue up 8% for 2012, and 12% for the year ending April 2013

HIGHLIGHTS

Wins included four new digital AOR assignments, as well as several new assignments from the agency's existing clients

Migrating systems into the cloud gave the agency increased staffing flexibility

CHALLENGES

Dealing with the effect of the rapidly changing roles within client organizations

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 187

“You must adopt a mindset of constant learning”

—Stephen Wray

Cadient Group

Making client engagement a prime focus helps to drive agency growth



Cadient Group instated an expanded client engagement team (CET) structure early last year to more closely align design and user experience (UX) teams, strategists and technology experts into account teams. President and CEO Stephen Wray says the strategy is helping drive growth. Revenue was up 8% ending 2012 and up 12% year-on-year ending April 2013.

“Having our core teams envisioning and implementing solutions in a more connected manner drives success for our clients,” Wray explains. “The CET structure has allowed us to accelerate ideas into action.”

Migrating core operational and collaboration systems into the cloud last summer has also increased efficiency and agility. Dubbed “C-MORE,” Wray says this model has created a more fluid work environment, and is generating positive performance feedback from clients.

Full-time staff held at 120 ending 2012. It's up to 124 this year.

Enabled by C-MORE, individual employees moved from headquarters in King of Prussia, PA to Boston, San Francisco, Seattle and the Carolinas to increase local support of biotech and specialty medicines clients.

Gabrielle Pastore joined last year from AstraZeneca as VP of commercial innovation, helping strengthen managed market and brand strategy capabilities. Chris Mycek, formerly of Johnson & Johnson, imc² and

Digitas Health, joined as chief customer officer.

New wins in 2012 included four digital AOR assignments spanning cardiovascular disease, metabolic disorders, consumer health, corporate communications and infectious disease. Existing clients awarded three new brand/audience assignments and two new enterprise/corporate level assignments. One launch was delayed but is back on track this year.

“We didn't project particularly fast top-line growth in 2012 because there was too much uncertainty in the market,” Wray says. “We set realistic growth goals and achieved them.”

The CET model has helped the agency adapt to challenges presented by decision-maker churn on the client side and continued uncertainty associated with product approvals. “Roles are changing inside client organizations at a pace I've never seen,” Wray says. “It challenges continuity of strategy, innovation and relationships. There also seems to be a trend toward delaying or gating pre-launch investment, leading to compressed timelines for launch execution.”

Wray also notes that launch rules are being rewritten, and that Cadient Group excels in that type of situation.

“In many ways we've built a change management group,” he says. “That's a really important attribute for customers who are trying to find a new way to commercialize.”

Though not always easy, Wray feels it's essential to anticipate clients' future needs while simultaneously meeting their current requirements.



Cadient's work for prostate cancer drug Provenge (above left) and The One Fund Boston (above)

“You must adopt a mindset of constant learning,” he explains. “Agencies must possess a curiosity about technology evolution and changes in user behavior related to emerging technologies. We need to anticipate and translate the impact both will have upon the future commercial model for life sciences companies.”

Revenue is expected to climb 14% or more by year's end. Wray says M&A possibilities are being evaluated, though nothing is imminent. —Tanya Lewis