



AT THE HELM

From left: Chris Palmer, managing partner, exec. creative director; Kyle Barich, president; Lori Klein, managing partner, director of client services; Ben Ingersoll, managing partner, exec. creative director

PERFORMANCE

Revenues held steady in 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

Creative projects included Qhysician, a social game for doctors

Launched Insight MD, a physician poll offering

Worked with Omnicom sibling BBDO on Healthwork business

Added new clients Takeda and Biogen Idec and new work from Novo Nordisk

Produced The Declaration, a statement of future principles

With Academy-award-winning director Cynthia Wade, produced "Wrestling the Monster," a film about hepatic encephalopathy

CHALLENGES

Diversifying the agency's client base

Building the capabilities needed to evolve beyond the print era

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

CDM New York has about 350 employees—up around 15 from last year—including 27 in their fast-growing LA satellite, which has won more and more work from one large client and “is increasingly becoming more of an independent agency over time,” says Barich.

CDM New York's medical director, Elizabeth Yi, was named associate partner last summer, and Rick Guzman came on from BBDO as director of technology, heading technology and development, while Dawn Rutkoski joined from JWT as director of operations.

The shop held steady in 2012, revenue-wise, winning business with new clients Takeda and Biogen Idec and adding to its accounts with Novo Nordisk. The agency won six accounts from existing clients without a pitch, including work with Salix Pharmaceuticals.

So far in 2013, CDM New York has picked up business on 15 brands and added three “significant” new clients to their roster.

CDM New York has done much to diversify its roster—not long ago, 82% of business was with Pfizer—and the agency has survived the loss of huge accounts like Lipitor professional to patent expiration while building the kinds of capabilities needed to evolve past the age of journal ads and print vis aids.

To keep evolving, they've adopted The Declaration, which came out of a retreat 18 months ago.

“We decided to wall ourselves off from the world for a few days and put ourselves in 2015,” says Barich. “And we made a declaration to create the future we want to live in.” It came, in part, out of a series of interviews the agency did with 14 VPs of marketing for biotech, pharma and device firms about what was important to them.

“The number one thing they came back with was some level of measured performance,” says Barich. “But you didn't have to scratch the surface before they'd add this concept of some deeper purpose, whether to patients, physicians, to progress and science. And what we came up with is that we feel a responsibility to help them hit their numbers, to hit their measured

What will hepatic encephalopathy destroy next?



As part of an effort to increase awareness of hepatic encephalopathy, CDM New York produced the documentary film “Wrestling the Monster”

performance, but also to realize this sense of purpose.”

For Salix, a North Carolina-based firm specializing in gastroenterology, the company produced a documentary film to raise awareness of hepatic encephalopathy, a complication of cirrhosis that Salix's Xifaxan combats.

“It's very rare, and doctors tend to overlook it, even specialists,” says Ingersoll. “They don't really know the impact on patients and their families. So this client took a risk with us and we said, ‘If we make this known to doctors, if we show them the other side of this, it's going to benefit everyone.’”

They hired Academy Award-winning director Cynthia Wade, who produced an arresting half-hour documentary called “Wrestling the Monster: Living With Hepatic Encephalopathy” that followed four patients and their families (it's housed at hesback.com).

“It's reaped great benefits for the entire community,” says Ingersoll. “Not just for patients and physicians, but for Salix, it sort of reignited their sense of purpose for what they're doing, which is to be a leading gastroenterology company in the world.” — Matthew Arnold