



AT THE HELM

Dorothy Gemmell, president

PERFORMANCE

Agency's global heft paid off in 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

Wins include business for Walgreens and Teva

Added work from Genentech, Biogen Idec, Sun Products Corp. and Santen; maintained current relationships with Wyeth Nutrition and GSK

New executive hires broaden agency's range

CHALLENGES

Uneven uptake on non-personal promotion

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

“We’re really focused on being able to deliver great thinking”

—Dorothy Gemmell

Havas Life New York

The name says “Big Apple,” but Havas shop has a global outlook



Havas Life New York, the agency formerly known as Euro RSCG Life Metamax, has the Big Apple in its new name, but its heart is elsewhere—two-thirds of the shop’s assignments have a global component. Its polyglot roster of clients spans high-science biologics and consumer packaged goods.

“We’re a pretty diverse book of business,” says agency president Dorothy Gemmell, who came in to lead the shop from WebMD in April. “We have everything from the high-science franchise of Biogen to Sanofi Diabetes to Walgreens to All Free and Clear laundry detergent.”

Before joining HLNy, Gemmell led WebMD’s global biopharmaceutical and medical device business, along with *WebMD The Magazine*. “I honestly wasn’t looking at agencies,” she says, “but it was a new and interesting challenge, a chance to grow another company from a different angle in this space I love.”

She replaced Laurel Rossi, who went back to running StratFarm, the firm she founded and sold to Havas, full time, and Marc Porter, who left the firm for personal reasons. The shop also recently gained a new Chief Creative Officer in Dave Garson, who joined

from CementBloc, and a new director of planning in Johanna Skilling, who came over from Havas Lynx and brings a strong background in women’s healthcare. Sunny Kang was named head of medical strategy, and Jess Seilheimer continues as head of digital strategy.

Recent wins include work for Walgreens and Teva’s women’s healthcare business. In 2012, they picked up DTC work for Genentech in neuroscience, a market development account for Biogen Idec, a Sun Products Corp. dermatology-focused professional assignment and a new client, Santen, along with an unnamed “big win in women’s health.” Other clients include Nestle’s Wyeth Nutrition and GlaxoSmithKline.

“We work with such a diverse group of brands but we’re really focused on being able to deliver great thinking,” says Gemmell. “Great strategy, great communications plans and ultimately great creative, across all platforms seamlessly, by helping to set the medical strategy and messaging and executing it, and at the same time doing what I’ll call traditional advertising communications—building the brand, delivering on sales force support and then non-personal promotion.”

Uptake of non-personal promotion is “lumpy,” she says, with some clients getting out ahead of the curve and others sticking to a strict diet of direct sales, but with access sure to get even tougher as the Affordable Care Act takes hold, it’s an inevitable part of the mix.

Global heft is paying off, says Gemmell. “The bulk of the spend isn’t necessarily in the US anymore,” she says. “People are spending on their ex-US launches and particularly their European businesses. We benefit from that because we have the footprint.” —Matthew Arnold



HLNy’s 2012 work included pieces for Wyeth Nutrition (above left) and All Free and Clear (above)