



AT THE HELM

Bill McEllen, president

PERFORMANCE

Revenue rose 15%, and is tracking at least that high for 2013

HIGHLIGHTS

Realignment places the agency in the new MTL Group

Six accounts added from such clients as Actelion, AstraZeneca, Boehringer Ingelheim, GlaxoSmithKline and Aptalis

Added 20 staffers, raising headcount to 167

CHALLENGES

Maximizing new organizational structure

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

McCann Torre Lazur

A “bolus shot” of new talent sets up McCann shop for continued success



Mostly, last year’s branding revisions set the stage for more recent events at the US professional agencies in IPG’s McCann Health network. Changes go past the titular: a management succession affecting McCann Torre Lazur (MTL) and McCann Echo Torre Lazur (METL), new reporting lines for leaders at all five shops, and other adjustments.

The windup for MTL is that Bill McEllen has a new role. The former METL president is now president of the agency, and of the McCann Torre Lazur Group.

The catalyst was the regionalization of the US professional units within the McCann Health global network. The new North American region is led by Marci Piasecki, who has been CEO of MTL for the last eight years and has overseen the MTL Group.

The move puts North America on par with Asia-Pacific, Europe and the leaders in each of those regions. “Rather than having it splintered across North America, particularly the US, where RCW is separate from the Torre Lazur Group of agencies, we [now] come up under one region,” Piasecki says. With the exception of Andrew Schirmer, who heads DTC shop McCann HumanCare, the US agency bosses have that direct

line to Piasecki: McEllen, McCann Managed Markets’ Kim Wishnow-Per and now McCann RCW Group’s Maureen Regan.

The MTL Group is now slightly smaller, sans McCann Managed Markets, which left (it shed the “TL” from its name) but remains part of McCann Health, leaving just MTL and METL under McEllen’s purview.

The upshot of this new alignment? “You won’t find any of the [North American] agencies competing with one another,” says Piasecki. As opportunities arise, “the [US] agency with the appropriate brain trust and conflict-free” status can be assigned.

As if those changes weren’t enough, MTL spent much of last year immersed in a talent audit involving its senior-to-mid-level staffers. “We’re growing the talent base here, continuing to bring on new people and give people in the organization new opportunities that afford us the [chance] to bring on new clients,” says McEllen. Tatiana Lyons, previously director of client services at MTL, became chief talent officer for the MTL Group, to work with Matthew West, her counterpart at RCW Group.

MTL eliminated Lyons’ old position and replaced it with two managing directors, Beth Beck and Mark Willman. Two other senior people moved from MTL to group-level posts, and one graduated from a group- to a regional-level role. “The regionalization gave us the chance to take a close look at all our high-potential talent and give people new opportunities,” sums Piasecki.

She’s also proud of MTL’s ability to add a “bolus shot” of new talent since the back half of last year (20 new joiners for the year, bringing headcount to



iPad work produced for Grifols’ Alphanate (above left) and a campaign for Shionogi’s Ulesfia (above)

“You won’t find any of the [North American] agencies competing with one another”

—Marci Piasecki

167) as well as the agency’s performance, up 15% and tracking at least that high in 2013, Piasecki reports.

Six accounts were added, including Actelion’s Ph. III PAH agent macitentan; AstraZeneca blood thinner Brilinta; BI’s Tradjenta/Jentaduetto diabetes brands; Novartis’ respiratory agent BYM338; Shionogi NSAID Naprelan; and Teva’s laquinimod MS candidate. Wins were offset by three losses: Aptalis’ Ultrase for pancreatic insufficiency and H. pylori treatment Pylera, and GSK’s cancer drug Arzerra. — Marc Iskovitz