



AT THE HELM

Scott Goudy, president

PERFORMANCE

Revenue up 15% for 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

Brought on group creative director Joe Marcoux from Ignite Health

Headcount went from 60 to 70 and is now at 75

Saw growth across all of the major digital areas

CHALLENGES

Moving “hesitant” pharma companies into the social media environment

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

“Websites are still important, but we’re seeing more mobile, more social”

—Scott Goudy

MedThink Communications

Raleigh-based firm uses a mix of skills to rebound from a flat 2011



MedThink Communications experienced a year of flux in 2011, with co-founder Walt Clarke stepping out of the firm’s day-to-day-operations, leaving president Scott Goudy to run the show under “a singular vision.” The Raleigh-based agency ended the year basically flat, Goudy said last year.

Things were significantly better in 2012, however. MedThink grew 15%, picking up a couple of new clients, and beefed up its creative and digital offering with new hires.

“It turned out to be a good year,” says Goudy. “We experienced nice growth overall and did some things that positioned us for the future.”

A lot of that setting up for the future involved staff changes and additions. One major change was the hire of new creative leader Joe Marcoux from inVentiv’s Ignite Health. Marcoux, who took on the role of group creative director, has deep Big Pharma and consumer brand experience. His resume includes companies from Bristol-Myers Squibb and GSK to Absolut Vodka, Citibank and Microsoft.

MedThink’s positioning leans hard on integration, with core areas being advertising and promotion, digital services, and media planning and analytics.

“Development,” Goudy says, “is an important part of the product” and, thus, most of it is done in house.

MedThink gained a new digital leader in Brian Sobus, the agency’s director of technology. Goudy noted that 30-40% of the typical brand’s budget is digital and that MedThink’s proportion of digital skews higher than that. He noted that MedThink is seeing growth across the major digital areas.

“Websites are still important but we’re seeing more mobile, more social,” Goudy said. “Social media is an area where pharma has been hesitant and continues to be. Some are starting to figure it out and dip toes into the water deeper. They’re also getting better at utilizing analytics to understand effectiveness.”

While digital is increasingly important to agencies of all stripes, Goudy says that MedThink’s revamped creative department still has a combination of traditional and interactive capabilities. “It’s imperative that [our creatives] have digital expertise and are also able to handle traditional media,” he notes. “But we do err on the side of having digital expertise.”

In 2012, MedThink’s headcount grew from 60 to about 70. (Hires early this year put the current staff at about 75.) Goudy’s projected growth for 2013 is a heady 30%. But there appears to be an inverse relationship between that growth and how much Goudy is willing to talk about.

Asked to name the “couple of new clients” MedThink has added, Goudy declined. “With all our clients now there’s contractual obligations not to disclose the



MedThink’s mix of traditional and digital work includes clients like Salix Pharmaceuticals (above)

information.” (In the past, MedThink has identified Salix, Glenveigh Medical, Rho, United Therapeutics, Teva Neuroscience and Wilmington Pharmaceuticals as clients of the firm.)

As for creative highlights, such as MedThink’s well-regarded Colonoscopy for Dummies programs, Goudy was once again circumspect, saying, “Our clients don’t want that disclosed.”

He also said that there were no major client losses for the agency: “We chose not to do business with a couple of small accounts that weren’t productive.”

—Matthew Creamer