



AT THE HELM

Brady Walcott, SVP; Christine Armstrong, managing director, healthcare; Amanda Gomez, SVP, client services; Peter Korian, president/founder

PERFORMANCE

Growth of 40% in 2012 and no account losses

HIGHLIGHTS

Genentech awarded agency AOR and digital AOR accounts

New business included work for Impax, Baxter, Vanda, Durata and Gilead

CHALLENGES

Finding digital-savvy staff

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

“Technology can be a turnoff for brand managers who have had a bad experience”

—Peter Korian

IOMEDIA

Digital pioneer extends range into the full-service territory



If an agency has created an interactive ticketing technology for the New York Knicks and a host of other pro and college sports teams, how much can it know about healthcare?

Quite a bit, actually. In 2012, IOMEDIA rode a new business-win streak that included Genentech, Impax and Baxter for growth of 40%. And healthcare represents 65-70% of IOMEDIA’s billings. Other offerings include sports and entertainment, film and interactive and, in a nod to founder-CEO Peter Korian’s roots, architecture.

IOMEDIA began in 1996 as an early digital agency. Its healthcare engagements have evolved from digital projects to digital AOR relationships to full-service AORs. The focus had been on professional marketing, but last year two big DTC AOR accounts came on.

Genentech made IOMEDIA full-service and digital AOR for Valcyte and digital AOR for Erivedge and its Access Solutions division. The agency won full-service and digital AOR duties for Impax’s Zomig and Rytary and AOR assignments from Baxter Pharmaceuticals for its Alpha-1 drug and HyQvia. Other wins included digital projects from Vanda Pharmaceuticals, Durata Therapeutics and Gilead. There were no account losses.

Korian says IOMEDIA has found a sweet spot with

smaller R&D-driven companies that normally sell marketing rights to larger pharma companies. “We see groups like that get funds to commercialize one or two brands every year or two,” Korian says. “They’re looking for an agency that can bring the whole gamut at a scale that makes sense.”

To provide those efficiencies, IOMEDIA, which is headquartered in New York, has a New Delhi office that handles much of its back-end engineering. This programming firepower opens the door to major tech development projects while keeping costs down, giving clients the product they want, and making sure they’re brought into the development process early on.

“Technology can be a turnoff for brand managers who have had a bad experience,” Korian says. “We can quickly prototype, show how user flow can work in an online sense, in an actual demo. They can sink their teeth into it and get their head around it.”

Adds managing director Christine Armstrong, “This prototyping model works for brand managers—they can shop it upstream or to regulatory, get a proof of concept very quickly and take on feedback.”

For Genentech’s Access Solutions franchise, IOMEDIA built a portal that houses 14 brands and offers more business engagement. Underlying it is a Drupal-based content management system built by IOMEDIA for the client’s regulatory, compliance and approvals needs. The CMS lets Genentech launch brands faster on the site. What once took 90 days now takes about 30.



Two pieces IOMEDIA produced for Genentech, for Valcyte (above left) and biomarker testing (above)

“We call that a traditional business transformation—the new face of the digital agency, as opposed to banner ads,” Korian said. “We’re helping our customers transform digital practices and that’s funneling into ROI.”

Korian’s big challenge now is finding digital-savvy staff in a healthcare industry that’s not great at training. To source them, he’s been looking to digital platforms and publishing companies as well as app companies.

“We end up grooming a lot of people,” he said. “It’s not the fastest way, but it is a customized way.”

—Matthew Creamer