



AT THE HELM

Ahnall Purohit,
president and CEO

PERFORMANCE

Revenues were up 22% for 2013, and more than 20% in the first quarter of this year

HIGHLIGHTS

Won two pieces of business for Gilead's Sovaldi

New relationships with Eisai (Belviq) and Alcon (olopatadine)

Expanded scope of work with existing clients Eloquest and PBN Pharma

CHALLENGES

The problems involved in getting access to HCPs

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 183

Purohit Navigation

Chicago firm leverages specialty expertise into growing revenues



Purohit Navigation had a good year in 2013, with strong 22% growth that was driven by both organic and new wins.

"I felt the economy started to improve for our clients and for us as an agency last year," says Ahnall Purohit, president and CEO of the Chicago-based firm.

One of the biggest of Purohit's new business highlights was winning two pieces of Gilead's Sovaldi business—AOR for a hepatitis C disease awareness program and AOR for non-specialist franchise branded communications. The win is testament to the agency's deep specialty expertise and its enduring client relationships, as the lead at Gilead was a former client at another company.

New relationships began with Eisai, after winning HCP-facing project work on Belviq (obesity), and with Alcon, for which the agency is doing project work on strategy for olopatadine (eye care) in pediatric markets outside the US.

Scope of work expanded with existing clients Eloquest and PBN Pharma. Work on Eloquest's ReliaFit extended beyond advertising into professional promotional education. PBN awarded AOR status for the launch of its OTC pediatric brand Boo Boos Be Gone.

"Our focus on specialty brands and diagnostics is working for us, and that's where our business is com-

ing from," Purohit notes. "We have a lot of organic growth, and when clients change jobs they often take us with them because we have great relationships. The model is different for larger network agencies, and they have to do more pitching. We don't want to be in that market. We're happy being a midsize independent agency."

In terms of trends, Purohit sees increased need to develop branding at the strategy level and ensure that it's carried through tactical execution—particularly for global work on specialty brands.

"As we go more global the whole value of strategic branding is diluted because of cultural challenges and what needs to be done in specific markets," she explains. "There's dilution in terms of creativity too. I think it will become even more difficult to figure out how to be creative and relevant and have value for branding when you're working globally."

On a more macro level, access continues to be a challenge, especially for expensive specialty brands. Purohit also feels it's becoming increasingly important to reach HCPs without adding to the information overload they're already experiencing.

"Medical knowledge doubles every five years," she says. "There's so much to learn that HCPs can't keep up. Giving them huge essays about a brand isn't going to work. You have to make it succinct and provide information that's absolutely necessary. Technology is also getting more complicated, yet HCPs want simple messages. You've got less than one minute to reach the professional with simplified, targeted messages that are relevant and that present the science in the way they need."



Purohit clients Boo Boos Be Gone (left), Procleix's PANTHER System and Eloquest's ReliaFit (above)



Business continues to increase this year. Revenue was up more than 20% in the first quarter.

The agency's senior management team remains one of the most stable in the business, and overall staff typically holds steady year-over-year at about 40. Purohit wants to make about four hires this year to support growth.

"We're looking for brilliant people who are committed to and have passion for the brands they work on," she says. "They have to believe in the quality of work we do here and provide outstanding client service. It's hard to find people who have everything."

—Tanya Lewis

"There's so much to learn that HCPs can't keep up"

—Ahnall Purohit