



AT THE HELM

Michael Schreiber,
president

PERFORMANCE

"Double-digit growth"
in both revenue and
headcount

HIGHLIGHTS

AstraZeneca came
on as a client, for both
oncology and gout
products in the devel-
opmental pipeline

Bulked up staff in its
San Francisco office,
making it "a hub of
our future growth"

Added data analytics
to its offerings

CHALLENGES

Shifting agency focus
toward developing
new technologies

For contact details, service offerings
and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z,
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"The real opportunities are with the biotech companies that are out there"

—Michael Schreiber

AgencyRx

CDM shop makes it to the agency A-list thanks to a diverse skill set



AgencyRx has toiled in the shadow of its CDM network siblings for much of its nine years. Even when it emerged as the second-largest company under the corporate umbrella, AgencyRx was dismissed in some corners as a "conflict shop"—the place CDM clients were shuttled off to when a conflict arose. The label was wholly inaccurate and unfair, but for a while it stuck.

That's no longer the case, rivals, clients and industry wags alike agree, and obviously AgencyRx execs aren't about to dispute their hard-won reputation as an A-list player. "I think we've officially achieved tier-one status," says AgencyRx president Michael Schreiber. "We've always competed with the big brand-name agencies, but now I think they're afraid of us."

Another year of healthy growth—Schreiber won't give specifics, acknowledging only that "we've had double-digit growth in terms of revenue and, in parallel, in headcount"—appears to have cemented that status. The company's new-business slate was headlined by the addition of AstraZeneca, for both oncology and gout products in the developmental pipeline. AgencyRx scored the accounts for different reasons, notes associate partner, director of digital marketing Matt Goff.

"We have a rich history of marketing oncology products and AstraZeneca has a rich history in the

oncology space, so that's a natural fit," he says. "For [the] gout [drug], the idea is to transform perceptions of the disease... I think we were able to articulate to [AstraZeneca] something beyond a vision." The firm also expanded its urology portfolio with "a couple of products," Goff adds.

AgencyRx didn't coast on the momentum from these wins. Instead, the firm bulked up its executive hierarchy with the addition of BBDO vet Molly Berkeley as director of client services and a pair of high-level hires for its San Francisco office. While the primary purpose of that office was once to serve Genentech, Schreiber now describes it as "a hub of our future growth. The real opportunities are with the biotech companies that are out there, the mid-sized companies that are looking for a local presence and maybe a more intimate relationship with a smaller team."

Closer to home, AgencyRx added data analytics to its offerings. While Goff says the company had long been cultivating its analytics brainpower, only during the last year did it become one of the firm's showcase talents. The opportunities, he believes, are boundless.

"Many clients have us create iPad details for sales reps," Goff says. "One of the things the analytics group can do is help us understand usage trends. What are the messages most resonating with doctors? Which message triggers a signing for samples or co-pay cards?"



AgencyRx work for Genentech addressed schizophrenia (left) and skin cancer awareness (above)

Looking to the second half of 2014 and beyond, the most pressing challenge facing AgencyRx is managing the growing pains. "Making the transition from medium-sized agency to large agency has operational implications," is the way Goff puts it. Expect the company to focus on developing new technologies to aid in sales interactions—to attempt to "kind of reinvent the sales call," Schreiber says.

Similarly, look for AgencyRx to direct its focus inward. While Goff quips that "Taco Tuesdays went over very well with our staff," the agency will invest heavily in training, whether via Omnicom University for its most senior execs or management boot camps for VP-level staffers. Hiring intelligently will also remain a priority.

"It's important to have that self-discipline, to not just hire bodies but to wait for the perfect person," Schreiber says. —Larry Dobrow