



AT THE HELM

Michael Metelenis,
president

PERFORMANCE

A 12% to 15% spike
in revenues put
the agency in the
\$15-million-to-\$25-
million range

HIGHLIGHTS

New business
included work from
Gilead (Sovaldi) and
AOR assignments from
Forest (Tudorza and
Saphris)

Along with HealthStar
PR, won AOR status on
advertising, medical
education and PR for
Ipsen's Somatuline

CHALLENGES

Lost work from AbbVie
and Merz

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

**"For me, it
has been the
best possible
transition"**

—Michael Metelenis

Centron

Keeping up with change sets
agency up for continued success



Change was in the air this year for HealthSTAR's Centron. Co-founder and former president Marcia McLaughlin was named group president of HealthSTAR Communications' Strategic Communications Group, overseeing Centron, Lehman Millet, HealthStar PR and HealthStar Market Access. Michael Metelenis, who co-founded Centron with McLaughlin and previously served as chief creative officer, was named president.

"With Marcia's move, I became president of the agency, working directly with the agency's senior creative directors, as well as its three managing directors," Metelenis says. "For me, it has been the best possible transition because Marcia and the SCG are located in the same new offices as Centron, providing the agency and our clients with continuity and smooth transitions."

Centron is loaded with senior-level employees who work directly on all client business. This has been a hallmark of the agency, and key to its success.

Creative directors Rob Perota, Letty Albarran and Frederick Rescott are jointly running creative, while Madeleine Gold remains a managing director of the agency. Christopher Mangione was promoted to managing director, and Shannyn Smith joined as managing

director of the agency's medical education division.

"It was a great year," Metelenis says. "We moved [to a significantly larger office in Manhattan], we have great cornerstone clients, and we had an unbelievable year with all clients. There was constant great energy at the agency. We added a lot of wonderful new talent."

Revenue was up between 12% and 15% in 2013, somewhere in the \$15-million-to-\$25-million range. Overall staff size held steady at 75 for 2013.

There were about 80 full-time employees as of May 2014, and Metelenis expects more hiring in the coming months. He says a new HR person was brought on in 2014 just to handle recruiting for Centron, Lehman Millet, HealthStar PR and HealthStar Market Access.

Everyone was busy last year working on launches for existing clients Bayer, Forest Laboratories, Orapharma and Shionogi. The agency's new business included work from Gilead on a nurse clinical education program for Sovaldi (hep. C). Long-time client Forest awarded AOR assignments for Tudorza (COPD) and Saphris (schizophrenia and bipolar disorder).

Merz's Naftin business and project work on AbbVie's Hypogonadism Clinical Educator Program were lost.

Siblings HealthStar PR and the newly launched HealthStar Market Access moved into Centron's office space in April 2014. Already this year, HealthStar PR and Centron jointly won AOR business for advertising, medical education and PR on Ipsen's Somatuline. "It's great to have both agencies so close," Metelenis says. "All three of us are growing."

In terms of industry trends and challenges, Metelenis notes the constant news of mergers. It was announced



**Digital work for Bayer Healthcare's Nexavar (left)
and creative for Eisai's Aloxi (above)**

in February that Centron's long-standing client Forest Laboratories is being acquired by Actavis. And Forest Laboratories agreed to buy Furiex Pharmaceuticals this past spring. Metelenis doesn't expect those changes to have a great impact on the agency this year.

Business is trending up again this year. Additional new work has come in from Bayer, Forest Laboratories, Orapharma and Shionogi. "We have had a terrific first quarter," Metelenis says. "The second quarter is looking good. We are pitching, and we will continue to pitch through the year." —Tanya Lewis