



AT THE HELM
Gregg Geider,
managing director

PERFORMANCE
Revenue flat in 2013

HIGHLIGHTS
Bringing in medical directors helped show clients the need for detailed medical knowledge

Clients included the American Heart Association and GlaxoSmithKline

With launches and new campaigns, this year should be “very much up”

CHALLENGES
Making the case for high science with KOLs

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“You need to demonstrate the value that transformational medicines can make”

—Gregg Geider

ICC Lowe Pace

Acting like a conflict shop—with the resources of a large company



In late 2013, Steve Viviano, CEO of ICC Lowe, tapped Gregg Geider to take the reins of conflict shop ICC Lowe Pace, trumpeting Geider’s ability to “bring resources together.”

Now, the agency is seeing the fruits of that decision: two HCP-focused business wins—new client Piramal, whose NeuraCeq radiotracer is used to detect beta-amyloid in patients with cognitive disorder; and an orphan drug from an existing unnamed client. Both wins showcase the new managing director’s knack for channeling expertise from the parent company.

“Pace was historically a separate agency,” explains Viviano. “When we rebranded [from ICC to ICC Lowe in 2011], the vision was for Pace to become one with the [other] ICC Lowe offices, and Gregg has embraced that.” That vision—to act like a separate agency if clients need a conflict shop, but still able to muster resources from the IPG-owned mothership—“is only as good as the rubber meets the road, and it’s happening by channeling these resources to clients,” Geider says.

Viviano says he had courted Geider for more than a decade. A 25-year ad vet who came from Omnicom’s Harrison & Star, Geider has stewarded many blockbuster brands, most recently Merck’s diabetes juggernaut Januvia, across agencies and geographies. That skill is coming in handy here.

“We weren’t really delivering on what I wanted last year,” says Viviano. “I needed someone who understood how to spot good talent, good resources, and to bring them to a client, irrespective of where the people sit.” Specifically, Pace had a legacy of not having medical directors. ICC Lowe did, courtesy of chief medical officer Stacy Patterson and her deep bench of MDs, PharmDs and PhDs.

The flagship agency was effective at showing clients the value of leveraging its 22 medical directors, in areas from pulmonology and neurology to OB/GYN. Every client, including J&J Baby Shampoo, has a medical director. But, “we were struggling with how do we get clients at Pace to see they need this,” says Viviano.

Geider says he’s had success in bringing ICC Lowe’s medical acumen to bear by suggesting clients allow Patterson, a physician, to moderate their next advisory board meeting. He’s also been leveraging ICC Lowe’s strategy group for the boutique agency’s clients, which include HCP, DTP and med-ed work for a biotech in the orphan drug space; the American Heart Association (pro bono); and GlaxoSmithKline fish-oil pill Lovaza, as well as for the drugmaker’s new ED sublingual pill, Staxyn, and older ED drug Levitra.

Revenue for 2013 was flat, which Viviano chalks up to a launch in 2012: “When you come off a year with a massive launch, it skews the dollars,” says Viviano. But with the number of launches and new campaigns on deck, Viviano predicts this year’s sales will be “very much up.”

Headcount rose slightly to 35 FTEs—that’s 50 when you count shared resources, points out Viviano.



Work from ICC Lowe Pace for NeuraCeq (left) and GSK’s fish-oil pill Lovaza (above)

With managed care becoming more cautious about reimbursing for newer orphan and specialty drugs, Geider says the agency is in a good position, considering its growing experience connecting brands’ value proposition to stakeholders. “In this area of unmet need and high science, even though the KOLs say they understand, you need to continue to demonstrate the...value that these really transformational medicines can make to the clinician seeing patients on a regular basis,” says Geider, “be it a physician, nurse or allied health professional.” —Marc Iskowitz