



AT THE HELM

David Nakamura,
founding partner

PERFORMANCE

Revenue increased by
about 10%, reaching
almost \$13.5 million

HIGHLIGHTS

New AOR assignments
from CSL Behring

Diversified into OTC,
device marketing
and medical food
promotion

Account wins in late
2013 have set the
agency up for major
2014 success

CHALLENGES

Devising strategies to
respond to increased
client demands for
efficiency

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

**“We’re trying
to make sure
that we’re
optimizing our
workflow”**

—David Nakamura

Natrel Communications

Tempering a diversification drive
with a focus on the fundamentals



Natrel Communications had a 2013 full of promotions, account wins, diversification, fundamentals—and farewells. Most prominent in the promotions department was agency veteran Nicole Hyland, bumped up from senior VP, director of client services to senior VP, chief marketing officer, and the promotion of Tamra Micco to Hyland’s former position. Meanwhile, the agency earned new AOR assignments from client CSL Behring for recombinant Factor VIII and recombinant Factor IX products for coagulation. It also diversified its roster into OTC, device marketing, and medical food promotion. Medical food in particular is a new entry on Natrel’s resume—it recently celebrated the launch of Entera Health’s EnteraGam, a prescription medical food product for the dietary management of enteropathy.

Even with these new developments, Natrel’s leadership is staying focused on the fundamentals of what they believe sets their agency apart. “I think the real key is that we always remain faithful to the belief that it’s the brand’s personality or the emotional connection that we’re creating with brands that makes us successful as an agency,” Hyland says.

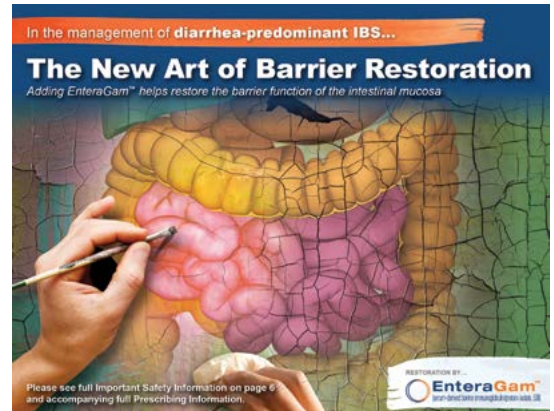
Many of the brands Natrel represents are in the

chronic medicine field. Given this, the agency takes seriously the idea of building strong long-term relationships not just between patients and brands, but between patients and organizations. “One thing we’ve done with our clients is really looking to loyalty to the organization as equally important to the brand,” Ms. Hyland says. “So we’ve worked closely with them to further establish corporate commitment and recognition.”

To achieve that sort of commitment, Natrel has been developing disease-based interactive hubs that support patients along the entire disease continuum, as well as franchise branding elements that unified portfolios. “This has been sort of a new approach for us, not only focusing on brand and the importance of brand promotion but also corporate promotion and recognition, and franchise as well,” Hyland says.

All this diversity and focus has led to consistent financial performance. In 2013 Natrel increased its revenue by about 10% to just short of \$13.5 million, the latest in several years of growth. And many of the agency’s account wins came late in the year, so hopes are high for even more success in 2014 and beyond—Natrel founding partner David Nakamura is projecting growth at 20% for the current year. More revenue, though, isn’t the only priority; the agency is also working on efficiency, since that’s what clients are demanding.

“We’re looking at ways to continue to improve our efficiencies and specifically our processes,” Nakamura says. “Our customers, their budgets—except for the launch year—keep going down every year post-launch



Work from Natrel for Impax’s Zomig nasal spray (left) and Entera Health’s EnteraGam (above)

and yet they have tools that they need in the field. So we’re trying to make sure that we’re optimizing our workflow so that they can execute those projects in a cost-efficient manner.”

The farewell? In early 2014 Natrel bid goodbye to Nakamura’s fellow founding partner, Allan Trent, who left the agency to pursue other opportunities.

“We had 15 good years, a nice run, and he felt it was time for a change,” Nakamura says of his former partner. “The agency is basically functioning as normal and Allan is pursuing other interests.”

—Joshua Slatko