

# Ogilvy CommonHealth Worldwide

An agency with a big name and clients takes a personal approach



**“We’re not just this network of offices around the world”**

—Matt Giegerich

Ogilvy CommonHealth Worldwide is a big agency that has ties to a lot of other big names. With 11 offices in the US in addition to a constellation of offices worldwide, it is linked with high-profile clients that include Bayer, Novartis, Roche and Weight Watchers.

Big is often construed as meaning cold and unreachable, but those expecting this sort of cool sheen from OCHWW will be surprised. The give-and-take among the principals sounds very much like that of a room of people who talk frequently and are at ease with each other. “It would be surprising to clients who don’t know us that we’re not just this network of offices around the world. It’s actually a collection of individuals who know each other, trust each other, like each other... that difference is all the difference when it comes to working for clients,” chairman and CEO Matt Giegerich tells *MM&M*.

This trust, in an agency where the average career hovers around the seven-and-a-half-year mark, is cultivated in an environment in which everybody from

the C-Suite down is part of the process. “It goes hand in glove with our philosophy,” managing director Michael Parisi says. The team’s banter is playful, but the all-in approach is taken seriously—this summer’s project includes attending a coding boot camp during which execs will have learned to develop, code and create a working app by the time the summer camp ends.

It is also the type of philosophy that keeps client work flowing in and what has energized the more than 150 US pitches the team competed in last year (of which they won about half).

It’s also what helps them and their clients weather the consolidation that’s happening among pharmaceutical clients and agency peers. This is in addition to navigating an overall shift in how clients are utilizing agencies, amounting to what Giegerich describes as “a bubbling sea of change.”

This change also includes what clients are asking for and the questions they are tangling with. The moment of the empowered patient—and the need to connect with patients through the multiple lenses of payers, professionals and individual customers—has arrived. Because of that, OCHWW’s core strength and purpose—behavior change—is not just a central conversation in the healthcare space, but almost *the* conversation when it comes to 21st-century health. Further, the pressure on outcomes and the triggers that prompt medication and wellness follow-through are now prompting payers, and therefore doctors, to ask pharma to do more than provide great products.

“Instead of presenting and communicating the outcomes of their drugs . . . [clients] are being combated with ‘here’s how your drugs are interacting with the real world within my practice,’” managing partner Shaun Urban says. Urban notes that the emergence of electronic health records helps practices see “how they are improving outcomes vs. peer groups of theirs.” This makes partnering up on the personal—not just the pharmaceutical formulary level—that much more



From left: the FORUM Pharmaceuticals website (left); a piece for Bayer’s Betaseron (above)

important. Clients are trying to figure out “how do we get engaged and become a part of it?,” he says.

Getting to this insight requires digging deeper than being able to say a medication is good and or better than what came before. It requires pulling from multiple disciplines including healthcare economics, data-



#### AT THE HELM

Matt Giegerich, chairman and CEO

#### PERFORMANCE

Out of the more than 150 pitches Ogilvy participated in, they won about half

#### HIGHLIGHTS

Roster of clients included such industry heavyweights as Bayer, Novartis, Roche and Weight Watchers

Developed the Fusion planning and operating system, which connects insights gleaned from various communications channels

Executed diabetes-related work for Weight Watchers that incorporated such features as one-on-one time with a certified diabetes educator, achieving what the agency calls "an evolution of the brand"

Increased its emphasis on data, and about to announce chief digital officer

#### CHALLENGES

Weathering the consolidation that's happening among pharmaceutical clients and Ogilvy's agency peers

Changing its approach to deal with the replacement of older media channels

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

base analysis, ethnography and sociology. All of these insights are part of what executives call "customer journey work," which is about what Parisi describes as "understanding behavior . . . and understanding what behaviors you are trying to change."

"We're also modifying the dialogue that's taking place," notes managing partner Darlene Dobry, who adds that the new conversations brands need to address are within the context of an even more sophisticated patient than seen in years past. "Patients are going into their physicians more educated and more informed."

The analytics and understandings that encompass behavior change and patient knowledge permeate the entire creative process, and while flashy creative or interfaces may be what draw the eye, these visuals and support tools are closely tied to key performance indicators that are baked into outreach.

The firm's proprietary Fusion planning and operating system connects these insights that flow through

diabetes program. "Weight Watchers has probably more years of evidence-based weight management and the impact it may have on one's health," Parisi notes, and says that its pivot towards a specific disease state, like diabetes, is an "evolution of that brand."

The Weight Watchers branded program incorporates the healthy eating sensibility of its non-diabetes program, but pairs it with diabetes-specific support such as one-on-one time with a certified diabetes educator, and the option to have an educator with a type 2 diabetes specialty. It is this sort of shift from what Weiner calls a "move from illness to wellness."

Helping define what this shift should entail is a talent pool that includes a crew referred to as the "mathletes" as well as a bench full of folks with masters in public health. Among these employees are Maggie Helmig, EVP global business lead, Michele Andrews, EVP of payer strategy and payer marketing, and Andy Willmer, who joined as director of client services.



An advertisement by Ogilvy for Gastro-Stop Plus, a diarrhoea medication from Aspen Healthcare

the various communications channels which reach patients with goals that vary at the point of contact along the patient experience. "The whole process is organized around getting the right choices, the right channel . . . the right message," Giegerich says.

"All of our offices use Fusion as our operating backbone, so it's something that's translated and breaks down barriers globally," notes managing partner Mark Weiner.

What this looks like depends on who you are. In the case of traditional healthcare-provider outreach such as journal reps and sales reps, this means these are no longer channels used to push and promote, but "are much more about engagement. They are no longer about interruptions and 'we have something to tell you.' Instead, [it's] 'we have a need. We know what that need is. We've constructed a program.'"

An example from the consumer perspective would be Weight Watchers, for which the firm worked on a

Diane Iler-Smith rejoined the crew as chief creative officer after a stint as senior creative director for Biolumina where she was also one of the startup's three principals.

OCHWW is also set to break in a new title: chief digital officer. The firm could not share the name at press time.

Underlying all the titles, degrees and analytics, and the not-uncommon mention of "passionate" employees is a clear undercurrent of fun and a joy about what the firm puts on offer. One example of this can be found in the agency's innovation lab, which is where they prototype software and develop hardware. A 3D printer is there, which was used to print renderings of T-cells for a medical conference. The strategic explanation for the 3D printouts is that they were a tangible example of an interactive opportunity. But Giegerich notes that they also have another use: you can juggle them. —Deborah Weinstein