

Stepping



Worldwide managing partners Donna Murphy and Doug Burcin

Euro RSCG Life last year increased revenue by double digits, won a number of major AOR assignments and hired more than 150 people. Add to that an entirely new network—Health 4 Brands, set to launch in the US this month—and it's clear why this fast-growing organization is noteworthy.

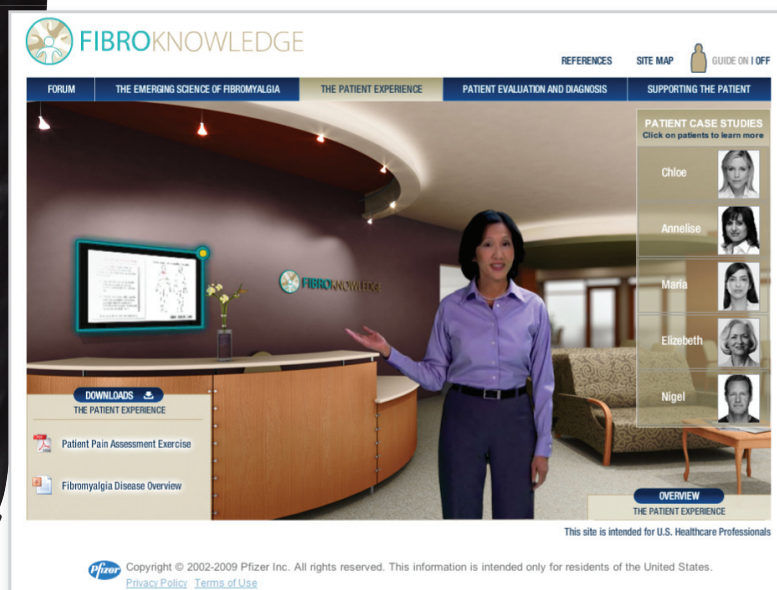
Worldwide managing partners Donna Murphy and Doug Burcin say these accomplishments stem from a strategy set in motion only a couple of years ago. "We are extremely entrepreneurial," says Burcin. "That has given us the speed and the agility to move our business model."

He and Murphy, who have helmed the Havas-owned healthcare network for the

last four years (Paris-based Michel Nakache is the third managing partner), designed a plan that has involved restructuring into a unified model, putting digital at the core of the operation and moving clients out of a tactical mindset into larger ideas that can be measured and propelled toward brand success.

Steps taken in 2009 involved launching new agencies Catapult and 4D and "unifying" four flagship units—including Catapult along with MetaMax, LM&P and Chelsea—that is, incorporating into each agency all the skill sets needed to drive creative business ideas for clients under one P&L, from advertising, managed markets and DTP to med ed, digital and PR.

A number of standalone agencies provide more targeted support—such as Medicom, acquired last year, when clients request a med ed-only pitch, and 4D for pure-play digital business. Much of the network's recent growth



into the Future

has come from non-advertising areas of the business. "If we weren't unified, we wouldn't have the growth that we have," says Burcin. Murphy adds that Euro RSCG Life's unification strategy is well-timed. "Clients aren't buying channels; they're buying ideas to drive their brands."

Major AOR wins have come from new clients Cephalon, Genentech, Medtronic and Novartis, as well as incremental brand assignments from long-term clients like Pfizer and Bio-gen Idec.

Another move designed to make it easier for clients to access network assets: Health 4 Brands (H4B), which parent Euro RSCG World-wide debuted overseas last year, is launching on these shores this month. Distinct from the Euro RSCG Life network, H4B is designed to give large clients more choice. "There are some people that really want to work with us but under current structures cannot," Murphy says.

Clients report being pleased with the network post-unification. Dennis Urbaniak, VP of innovation and new customer channels for Sanofi-Aventis US, lauds a showcase of mobile software which Euro RSCG Life's stand-alone technology shop, Havas Drive, hosted for the client in November. As opposed to vendors simply pitching wares, application developers were on hand to demo prototypes and share their perspective.

"This was a true development discussion with people on the leading edge," recalls Urbaniak of the forum, dubbed Mobile Practice Day. "We got to talk to developers about business challenges to hear what they're thinking, how they're breaking down the market and their view of where they see mobile going. That was incredibly helpful for us and

2009 HIGHLIGHTS

ACCOUNT WINS

- Cephalon
- Genentech
- Medtronic
- Novartis

LAUNCHES

- Medicis (Dysport)
- Merck Consumer Healthcare (Miralax)
- Merck (Saphiris)

ROSTER

- Bayer HealthCare
- Biogen Idec
- Bristol-Myers Squibb
- EMD Serono
- Endo
- Medicis
- Pfizer
- Sanofi-Aventis
- Savient
- Shire

Above: Journal ad for wrinkle filler Restylane. Bottom left: Virtual fibromyalgia educational environment for Pfizer, aimed at healthcare professionals

added a lot of value for our teams as we try to find new ways to serve patients and physicians."

Havas Drive, whose main business is developing virtual environments, and 4D demonstrate the network's mantra of getting clients to the future first. Both shops are overseen by Larry Mickelberg, who was hired last year from Digitas Health to be the worldwide health network's chief digital officer. A thought leader who spoke at FDA's social-media hearings in November, Mickelberg is tasked with raising the digital bar globally. Rather than going into acquisition mode, the network—with his help—is digitizing from the inside out.

"We have a strong digital presence; we wanted to keep upping the ante," Murphy says.

Other hires helping foster a digital culture include Marian Salzman, president, Euro RSCG Worldwide PR, who had left for JWT and Porter Novelli before being hired back

last year. She is regarded as one of the foremost social media/marketing experts in the world.

Salzman and Mickelberg will spearhead Euro RSCG Life's perspective on social media, marrying PR and digital to form a complete offering encompassing earned and paid media. Their presence has already paid off: In the last three months, the network has been named AOR for social media for two large pharma clients. The network is also building out its digital search and media practice, hiring online media planners and buyers and experts in organic and paid search.

Another move, aimed at servicing existing global clients Sanofi-Aventis and Pfizer, is the opening of a Montreal office. A San Francisco bureau was opened to service West Coast business like Genentech, and one in Boston is planned to tap into New England's biotech corridor. Also on the agenda: LM&P's 30th anniversary in 2010. —Marc Iskowitz