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AGENCIES



AT THE HELM

Marc Sirockman, EVP and general manager

PERFORMANCE

Revenues are up 10%, near the high end of the \$15-million to \$25-million range

HIGHLIGHTS

Won 14 new accounts including work from Medtronic, Nestlé, Becton Dickinson, Endo Pharmaceuticals and Covidien

Total active accounts is just under 50

CHALLENGES

To continue to stay a few steps ahead of the curves—regulatory and others

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

“THE FOCUS ON THE PATIENT—THAT’S NOT GOING TO GO AWAY ... HOPEFULLY WE’LL BE IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME TO HELP OUR CLIENTS AND PATIENTS.”

—MARC SIROCKMAN

ARTCRAFT HEALTH

Flexibility and muscle create success



Asked for his biggest-possible-picture take on 2014, Artcraft Health EVP and general manager Marc Sirockman starts his response by referencing the “reverberation of change” felt in all corners of the business. “From the start of 2014 until now, you’ve seen everybody talking about being patient-centric,” he notes. “This has been going on for a while, but now people are getting wise that they actually have to do something about it.”

What he doesn’t say is that Artcraft’s recent success has been predicated, in no small part, on recognizing and reacting to those changes before they unfolded. In 2013 it meant expanding beyond the agency’s historical focus on education to add expertise in clinical trials, devices and wellness. In 2014 it meant the debut of an in-house innovation team, one that works alongside pharma and healthcare clients to assist them in their efforts to adapt to and thrive within the evolving industry landscape.

“I think what we’ve done is identify our strengths and honed them,” Sirockman says.

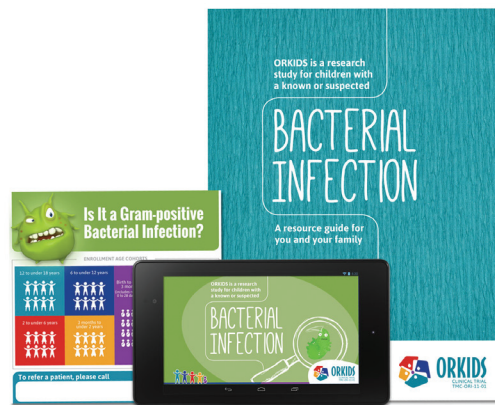
While he adds that this required the agency to “re-org a little bit”—year-on-year head count is steady at 70 full-timers—he reports that clients old and new have been responsive. Artcraft won 14 new accounts in 2014, including work from Medtronic,

Nestlé, Becton Dickinson & Co., Endo Pharmaceuticals and Covidien, among others. This drove the company’s total number of active accounts to just under 50. Revenue rose by 10% and sits near the high end of the \$15-million to \$25-million bracket.

What Artcraft offers clients is a combination of flexibility and consultative/analytical muscle that usually eludes shops of its size. “With pharma companies, although there are smaller budgets in many cases, they still require a good deal of support,” Sirockman explains. “They know they need help but they don’t want to hold somebody’s hand. What we try to do is think two steps ahead of them: ‘Okay, this is what we talked about, this is what we’re delivering—and here are a few ideas on top of that.’”

Artcraft also thrived within its traditional area of expertise, developing the CODE diabetes patient-education program and deploying it throughout the biz. “We did a couple of different versions—we’ve done it in languages other than English,” Sirockman says. On the flip side, Artcraft dealt with a handful of the same challenges and nuisances that wounded colleagues and competitors alike. “The most common challenge we face is regulatory delays, the changes within products as we’re ramping up for a launch,” Sirockman says. “When a project can’t move forward due to something that’s out of everybody’s control, people struggle with that.”

Similarly, Artcraft was forced to deal with some small degree of fallout from the industry’s raft of mergers and acquisitions during 2014. “The best



Sunovion’s Living with COPD (above left) and ORKIDS pediatric clinical trial campaign (above) show Artcraft’s finesse

way to put it is that sometimes it works out in your favor and sometimes it doesn’t,” Sirockman shrugs.

The agency’s challenge moving forward, then, is to continue to stay a few steps ahead of the curve while at the same time remaining true to its core mission and strengths—which is a fine line to toe, Sirockman admits. “The focus on the patient—that’s not going to go away. But we’ve done that. We’ve had that experience. Hopefully we’ll be in the right place at the right time to help our clients and patients. That’s the goal, anyway.”

—Larry Dobrow