

**100
AGENCIES**



AT THE HELM
Stan Woodland, CEO

PERFORMANCE
Revenues of \$50.3 million—up just over 20% for 2014

HIGHLIGHTS
Recent additions to the client roll include Biogen, Novartis, Cubist, Otsuka, Supernus and Impax

Developed an HCP-specific media buying/planning platform called AdMission

CHALLENGES
Ushering pharma into programmatic ad buying

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

“IF THERE’S A STUBBORN SEGMENT OF PHYSICIANS THAT, FOR WHATEVER REASON, JUST WON’T BUDGE ON A BRAND, IT’S ON US TO FIGURE OUT WHY.”

—STAN WOODLAND

CMI/COMPAS

Growth through evolution, not revolution, defines this agency’s vision



Despite annual revenue that passed the \$50-million mark in 2014 and a client roster that includes numerous inhabitants of the pharma top 20, CMI/Compas hasn’t appeared in *MM&M*’s agency issue for several years. Which poses a question: Why is that?

Turns out the exclusion had more to do with a dated *MM&M* policy favoring promotional shops than with anything else. That said: If a feature of this sort can’t find room for the industry’s preeminent media-buying and -planning agency, it ought to take a good hard look at itself in the mirror.

So what’s been up with CMI/Compas since its last Top 100 appearance? Growth, mostly, at a pace that exceeds the industry average. CEO Stan Woodland reports that the company has added around 140 employees since the beginning of 2013. This jumped head count to 214 at the end of 2014, with another 40 onboarded so far in 2015. Revenues surged just over 20% in 2014 (to \$50.3 million) and, per Woodland, are on pace to grow nearly 30% in 2015. Recent additions to the client roll include Biogen, Novartis, Cubist, Otsuka, Supernus and Impax.

The growth doesn’t feel ephemeral. “I don’t believe in revolution. I like to grow a company through evolution,” Woodland says. “What’s driving us is an ability to demonstrate a thorough understanding of our clients’ audiences.”

Just as important, one imagines, is CMI/Compas’s focus on accountability: The agency measures everything, likely down to the efficiency with which its break-room coffee stirrers are replenished.

While it’s expected in this day and age that every company will attempt to prove ROI—agencies that perform this chore casually are the ones you’ll soon find on the endangered species list—CMI/Compas has taken measurement to a different level.

“Clients want to know what’s working, what’s not working and what will make the things that aren’t working work,” Woodland says. “If there’s a stubborn segment of physicians that, for whatever reason, just won’t budge on a brand, it’s on us to figure out why.”

Granted, it’s easier to quantify success or failure in the metrics-rich world of digital media than it is elsewhere in healthcare marketing. At the same time, CMI/Compas has such supreme confidence in its ability to move the needle with media that it has started to assume a large share of client risk. Let Woodland explain: “We go to a client and say, ‘Hey, we want to co-promote with you.’ So we take an audience they don’t allocate professional resources to and have no budget for, and we put up the entire budget. All of it. We get paid for our investment in media and we share in the incremental revenue.”

Does it work? “There are some nervous nights,” Woodland says. “But in every engagement so far, we’ve exceeded the client’s expectation in terms of script lift.”

Compas/CMI’s next challenge is to usher reluctant pharma clients into the age of programmatic buying (for the uninitiated, this basically means using software to buy digital advertising). The company anticipated the media world’s move toward programmatic two or three years ago, developing a successful HCP-specific media



Above left: CMI/Compas’s infographic for allergy/immunology targets. Above: Its By Doctor dashboard for MacBook Pro

buying/planning platform called AdMission.

While many of Compas/CMI’s clients have embraced the change, Woodland says an education gap still exists. “We have to overcome the misperception that programmatic is basically a race to the bottom in terms of pricing. That’s not the case in healthcare, where quality digital inventory is actually scarce. There’s no surplus like there is in most consumer markets.”

—Larry Dobrow