AT THE HELM
Jennifer Matthews,
Managing partner

PERFORMANCE
Revenues of $45.4
million, down from
$46.9 million in 2013

HIGHLIGHTS
Won 75 creative awards
across domestic and
global forums, 36 more
awards than its next
closest competitor

Named by UK blog
Advertising Health
as #3 healthcare
agency worldwide in
the first-ever "World
Top 10" list, based on
wins at major industry
award shows.

Its Value Builders
team experienced
more than 60%
growth in 12 months

CHALLENGES
Attracting and retain-
ing top talent remains
a huge priority in
such a competitive
marketplace

> **IT'S SIMPLY WHAT
> PEOPLE ARE DOING.
> EVERYBODY NEEDS
> TO BE DIGITAL AT
> THE CORE."**
>
> —SUE MILLER

THE CEMENTBLOC

Winning over the cynical consumer

If you were wandering around New York City last September and heard some celebratory scream-ing, it just may have been from the fourth-floor conference room of The CementBloc. The agency had just learned that it had been named one of six agencies on Bristol-Myer Squibb's agency roster for pre-launch and launch brands.

"Besides being a nice conclusion to that year-long process, which included meetings and presen-tations in Europe and Asia, it's also special that we are the only independent agency of the six," says Jennifer Matthews, managing partner. "And to have it happen in the 10th year of our Indigenus global network made it feel like a nice validation of our model. When the conference call came in with the news, it was *not* quiet in that room. There were lots of hugs and lots of high fives."

But that's not all the agency has to be proud of, she says. The CementBloc continues collecting accolades for creative work, winning 75 creative awards in domestic and global forums, "36 more awards than our next-closest competitor." In June UK blog *Advertising Health* compiled its first top-ten list of worldwide agencies, with the Bloc landing the No. 3 spot (the highest-ranked US firm).

Much of that attention came from small-but-noisy efforts, including "Mr. Butt," a campaign for Giazo, a treatment for ulcerative colitis from Salix calling attention to the many reasons men don't follow up on treatment. Other big winners included Girls Right of Way and Happy Fuel, but the agency is also crowing about its Bravest Client Award, earned for work in the last several years for Celgene. (The agency re-signed both the Celgene Abraxane US professional account and Novartis Afinitor US patient business.)

But the Bloc also brought plenty of its creativ-ity to bear on its business model, looking to help clients do more with less. It officially launched and branded what it calls its value builders payer value proposition, in development since 2009 as The Bloc value builders. Sue Miller, co-founder, says the val-ue builders is the fastest-growing group within the agency, up 400% in the last three years, and 60% in the last 12 months. "They infuse that thinking and that mind-set into the entire brands' team, even the patients and consumers," she says, "serving an important strategic role."

The CementBloc is sharpening its digital insights. "We are the digital agency of record for several of our clients," says Miller, and it added digital assign-ments from ProCure Treatment Centers and Merck. "But we're talking about it less as digital or mobile, because it's simply what people are doing. Every-body needs to be digital at the core."

Small but noisy: advertising for Novartis's meningoccal vaccine Bexsero (above left) and for Regeneron (above)

With such clients as AstraZeneca, GSK, Mer-ck, Pfizer and Zoetis, this year's key hires include Mariana Sanchez de Ovando, SVP, global business director for Indigenus, and Robin Tzannes and Sharon Butler Howard, both SVP, creative director. Total head count in 2014 is 170, up from 168 the prior year.

And so far this year, it's added AstraZeneca's Type 2 diabetes treatments Farxiga and Onglyza, Merck vaccines e-commerce site, and the Monte-fiore Hospital System.
—*Sarah Mahoney*