



AT THE HELM
Lisa Stockman, president, global public relations and medical communications

PERFORMANCE
Showed a revenue bump in 2014

HIGHLIGHTS
Changed name of group

Added Novartis as a client

Partnered with Newlink Group to expand multicultural health offerings

CHALLENGES
Improving its PR connections across the board

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INVENTIV HEALTH PR GROUP

A new name but a story long in making



Healthcare communication entities don't come much more agile and broad-shouldered than the newly renamed inVentiv Health Public Relations Group. Need a little push in big pharma? Chandler Chicco Agency, medical mouthpiece for Viagra and Celebrex during their initial runs, has you covered. Looking to make some noise in biotech? Take a trot over to Biosector 2, which is equally comfortable working with the Mercks of the world as with the space's scrappy start-ups. How about a populist voice? That'd be Allidura Consumer, currently talking up health on behalf of monster mainstream brands like Coca-Cola, Mondelez, Nestlé and Johnson & Johnson Baby. Throw in the science specialists at Chamberlain Healthcare PR and, well, inVentiv has you covered.

To answer the next logical question: Of course this was by design. While the company's recent good fortunes have something to do with market trends, inVentiv set itself up for success by investing heavily in the wellness, social-media and biotech spaces years before they heated up.

"For so long there had been kind of a predictability of the types of drugs you'd work with," says Lisa Stockman, inVentiv's president, global public relations and medical communications. "Then the reality of Lipitor and Plavix going off patent kicked

in and it was like, 'Okay, we're going to need to do more with less.' Fortunately, we'd thought about all of that before it happened. We were ready."

So while Stockman admits that, in a general sense, "Our sun rises and sets as pharma's rises and sets," the inVentiv agencies pulled through the 2013 patent/Affordable Care doldrums without enduring too much of a hit. Each of the firms enjoyed a small revenue jump in 2014, with clients like Novartis coming on board. It's the work itself, in fact, that Stockman is most keen to discuss.

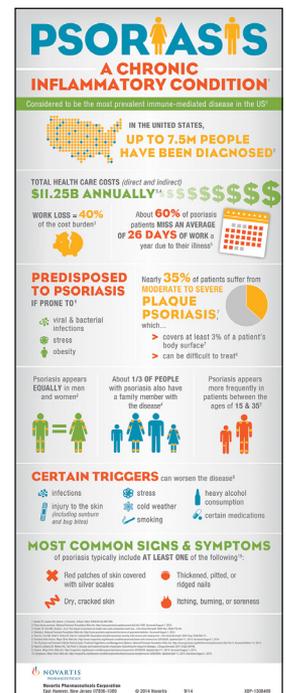
"Novartis is a good example because it's a program focused on advanced breast cancer," she says. "Usually you just hear about the pink-ribbon campaigns, but patients with [advanced breast cancer] have different needs. It's hugely rewarding work."

The company also indulged its scholarly bent, unveiling the results of a survey about millennials and their attitudes toward healthcare. "You think, 'Oh, they're young. What do they have to worry about in terms of disease?'" Stockman says. "But what we found is that this generation is the 'worried well'—they're worried about the prospect of chronic disease or not being healthy, which runs counter to what people think." Left unsaid? The value of this kind of insight to brands within the wellness space.

inVentiv grew in other ways during 2014. It launched an issues management practice to "codify what we've been doing for 20 years," Stockman says. "It's about issues management in the digital age. What does it mean when activists take over your Facebook page?" The company partnered with the Miami-based Newlink Group to expand its multicultural health offering. "It's not enough just to translate something. You have to understand cultural nuances if you want to really connect."

As for the name change, Stockman downplays its significance. "We've been a part of inVentiv Health for years. We'd just been using Chandler Chicco as an umbrella for all the PR agencies," she explains. "But since we are doing more and more cutting across business lines to help clients commercializing products, we didn't need that dual ladder-ing. It was about making the connection stronger."

—Larry Dobrow



Above left: Engaging the "worried well," inVentiv's ad for Allidura and GSW. Above: an infographic for Novartis

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—LISA STOCKMAN