



#### AT THE HELM

Left to right: Michael Austin, executive creative director; Kim Johnson, president; and Louis Massaia, executive creative director

#### PERFORMANCE

Had a "tremendous year"

#### HIGHLIGHTS

Established New York City as new base of operations

New partnerships with Hologic and Good Start Genetics

Continued creative collaboration with Celgene

#### CHALLENGES

Building for the future

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

## PALIO

A reassembled leadership team leads a rebranded agency



In 2014 Palio put a new leadership structure in motion, altered its geographic footprint and expanded into new client interests. Following a first-quarter 2015 rebranding, the agency's most recent transformation is a conscious response to changes across the healthcare industry.

Kim Johnson was tapped as the new president of the inVentiv Health agency in 2014. Then the shop kicked off 2015 by adding a pair of executive creative directors: Michael Austin and Louis Massaia. The agency reportedly exceeded top and bottom line goals in 2014. "We had a tremendous year," Johnson shares.

Although the agency's heritage is in Saratoga Springs, NY, shop leaders made a bold move to establish New York City as its new head of operations. "Eight significant account wins allowed us to grow the NYC office and strengthen and grow our other offices," reports Johnson, referring to expansion that upped the West Coast office tally to two, when Santa Monica joined the previously established Irvine locale.

A move into the diagnostics sector, namely a partnership with new client Hologic in San Diego, precipitated the firm's expansion on the West Coast. "We enjoy working with companies that are delivering new technologies and advances in sciences," Johnson says.

With a newly aligned leadership structure heading up its 150-person workforce, agency leaders feel they have the backbone to challenge themselves in new areas. A partnership with Good Start Genetics,

a genetic testing company based in Cambridge, MA, marks the agency's most recent foray into uncharted territory.

In 2014, the shop continued its creative collaboration with Celgene, specifically on its Otezla brand approved to treat psoriatic arthritis and plaque psoriasis. According to Austin, the work marks Celgene's commitment to a new arena: immunology.

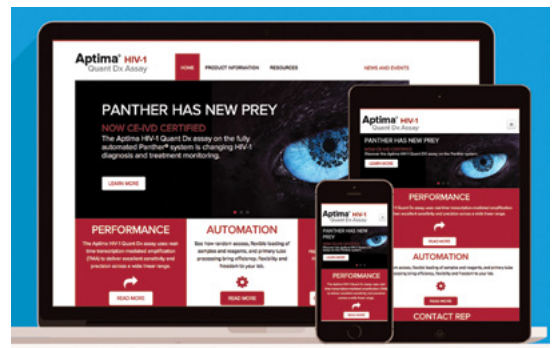
The Celgene campaign—consisting of four launches in 12 months—was executed in tandem by the Saratoga and NYC teams. "It's our job to blur the line of what is expected for a consumer effort," Massaia says. "We design campaigns that feel real, impactful and memorable."

Across all endeavors, the team is reminded of the agency's core value: Do the Great Thing. "We want our employees to embody this with each other, their clients and the industry at large," Johnson relays.

To strengthen the local leadership structure at each agency, Johnson assembled managing directors to form a cohesive and integrated team: Andrea Kretzmann in California, Maureen Wendell in Saratoga Springs and Cheryl Fielding in NYC.

Palio is primed to respond to global changes in the industry, namely, the fact that audiences aren't as patient as they once were. Agency leaders recognize the importance of delivering messaging and communication that permeates and is effective immediately. "We need to make sure that what we put out there doesn't wait to be noticed," Massaia says.

Palio is self-described as digital to the core. To that end, Palio created the Design Experience Lab, a "union that allows us to consider our end users and how they engage in our brand," Johnson says. "It



Above left: Apps for Alkermes directed toward CNS treatment. Above: Palio's work for Hologic's Aptima assay

needs to be easy to interpret across all channels."

Austin feels the agency is heading in a direction that reinforces the idea of renewed energy. "We understand that we can't do everything, but we can do anything," he promises.

Presently, Palio is building for the future. "Our brand is igniting," Johnson says. "We're excited for the rest of 2015."

—Rebecca Mayer Knutsen

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—MICHAEL AUSTIN