



AT THE HELM

Gerry McLaughlin, chief creative officer, and Pat Chenot, EVP and global brand director

PERFORMANCE

Back on track after a year of change

HIGHLIGHTS

Earned Biogen's hemophilia business late in the year

Signed Gerry McLaughlin as chief creative officer in January

CHALLENGES

Lost business accounting for a third of its revenue

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

H4B CATAPULT

Persevering through a blip in business



The folks at H4B Catapult learned a valuable

lesson in 2014: Diversification breeds success in the healthcare marketing and advertising arena. "We experienced a change in brands in 2014 that affected revenue and turnover in staff," recalls Pat Chenot, executive VP, global brand director, H4B Catapult. "The business that went away represented a third of our revenue."

Agency leaders perhaps found the bitter pill easier to swallow because none of the changes related to performance. "Brands lose exclusivity or they don't make it through the FDA, and there are market shifts outside our control," shares Gerry McLaughlin, chief creative officer of the seven-year-old Havas Health agency.

The agency turned things around at the close of 2014 and has continued the trend well into 2015, says Chenot. The shop ushered in four significant new business wins, including two blockbuster products. "We are completely back on track."

The business blip didn't bring the team down. In fact, it seems to have sent a bolt of energy across the group. Agency leaders have a jocular air about them, indicating everyone is clearly having a good time in Hamilton, NJ.

H4B Catapult was awarded the Biogen hemophilia business late in 2014, a significant US and global win. Additional new wins include Alcon's Durezol eyedrops for pain and swelling after eye surgery; Alcon's Ilevro for the treatment of pain and inflam-

mation associated with cataract surgery; the US and global business for Novartis Oncology's Farydak for patients with multiple myeloma; and sarilumab, a monoclonal antibody for rheumatoid arthritis (RA) from Sanofi and Regeneron Pharmaceuticals.

According to McLaughlin, sarilumab has proven advantages over other products in the crowded RA market and is expected to reach blockbuster status. "We're pretty excited about the work we've been awarded," he states.

When McLaughlin joined the team, in January 2014, he was given a free hand to develop the creative department as he saw fit. "My philosophy is everyone is creative, they just need to be given permission to be creative," he says. "I often hear people say, 'I'm not creative.' I love proving them wrong."

Chenot says having Gerry on board has changed the attitude in the agency. "He's fun, enthusiastic and welcoming," he observes. "But most of all, he rolls up his sleeves and gets in the trenches."

The agency has established an in-house culture that hinges on learning. "We're all experienced but we need to keep learning," McLaughlin states. "What you did yesterday may not work today or tomorrow."

McLaughlin attributes the emphasis on culture to Chenot. "Culture is a precious part of the business," McLaughlin says. "We spend a lot of time here and Pat makes sure that we work and learn, but also have fun in the process."

McLaughlin believes that no matter what chan-



Above left: Collateral for H4B Catapult internally. Above: H4B Catapult work explaining the IL-6 pathway in RA

nel the agency dabbles in, the focus needs to be on the strength of the idea. "A provocative, simple and clear message that incites action is always our goal," he relays. "There are 100 reasons why an idea won't work, so how can we transform ideas to make them better? That's the biggest challenge."

The agency is poised to do good things in 2015, and way beyond. "Last year was a year of change," Chenot discloses. "It made us stronger."

—Rebecca Mayer Knutsen

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—GERRY McLAUGHLIN