



AT THE HELM

Managing partners (l-r): Marina Jean, MD, Michael Schreiber, Ralph Skorge, Wendi Goodman and Fred Kinch

PERFORMANCE

Saw 10% revenue growth

HIGHLIGHTS

Merged with specialty sibling Lab9

Benefited from Bayer consolidation, picking up Bayer Animal Health work

Completed project work that included a Wii game for patient education

CHALLENGE

Lost Novartis' Gleevec and Tasigna, AgencyRx's largest (premerger) account

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see *Agency A-to-Z*, beginning on page 171

“Digital is involved in every single brand here...What started as one e-detail turned into a dozen”

—Michael Schreiber

AgencyRx

After merge with sibling Lab9, losing largest account, shop ends year up

The CDM conflict shop merged with its smaller and more specialty-focused sibling Lab9 to form a big agency with “breadth and depth.”

“The rationale was two-fold,” says Wendi Goodman, managing partner, director of client services. “When you look at Lab9, while we were successful with the clients and brands we had, it was really hard for us to grow. The economy wasn’t good and lots of people want to work with bigger, more established agencies. On the AgencyRx side, a very busy, successful agency with strong client relationships, but on strategic services—medical, account planning—a little light.”

“We grew so rapidly in our first five years that the leaders we had in place weren’t broad enough to handle a 200-person agency, so we needed an infusion of expertise,” says managing partner, executive creative director Michael Schreiber.

The merger lent Lab9’s scientific expertise to AgencyRx’s global reach and digital marketing proficiency and produced a 200-person agency, about 160 having come from the AgencyRx side and 30 from Lab9. Three of Lab9’s partners—Goodman; director of strategic and scientific services Marina Jean, MD; and creative director Fred Kinch—came over to AgencyRx in the merger, while AgencyRx’s Laurence Richards, co-director for client services, left to join Juice Pharma Worldwide.

The shop saw 10% revenue growth despite the loss of Novartis’ Gleevec and Tasigna, which were—combined—AgencyRx’s single largest account, premerger, and which the shop had handled for four years.

But AgencyRx benefited from Omnicom’s win

in the Bayer consolidation, picking up the US and global assignment for Bayer Animal Health, including all companion animal products and animal food products.

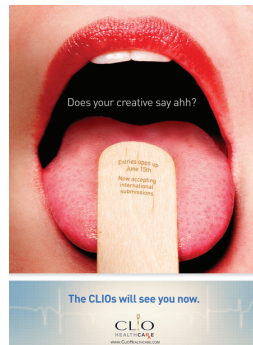
Other notable wins include: a premarket Pfizer oncology product; an assignment from Ortho Clinical Diagnostics Group; new work from Genentech in immunology; and Novartis’ schizophrenia drug Fanapt, which was awarded without a pitch.

Novartis remains the shop’s top client, with accounts on Exjade, Femara, Exelon Patch, Enablex, Galvus and Stalevo.

Genentech, a key Lab9 client, and Bayer Animal Health are big customers. The agency maintains a satellite office in San Francisco for the Genentech business and opened an office in Kansas City to support its Bayer Animal Health accounts. Serono and King have substantial accounts at the agency.

The agency added SVP, management supervisor Mark Arnold, who joined from Euro RSCG Life, and SVP, senior account lead, Latifa Alledina, who joined from Integrated.

Around a third of the shop’s work is digital, the remainder rep-delivered or print, and around 80% is targeted to healthcare professionals. The agency’s digital business exploded in 2009.



Left: A call for creative entries for the CLIO Healthcare Awards; Right: A professional ad for Gonial-f Cares

“Last year, we had a couple pioneering projects, and now they’re ubiquitous,” says Schreiber. “Digital is involved in every single brand here, and on some brands, it’s more than half the fee. What started as one e-detail has turned into a dozen.”

The shop’s digital projects last year included a Wii game for patient education.

“Our DigitalRx group is one of the best in the business, and we’ve been given unbelievable opportunities by our clients as field forces are declining and directly reaching the physician is more and more important,” says Goodman. “We also have a depth and breadth in our medical group, in our account planning, so we’re really able to work with our clients on the strategic insights they’re looking for, whether it’s a high science brand or a general medicine brand.”

—Matthew Arnold