



**AT THE HELM**

Doug Burcin, president

**PERFORMANCE**

Forecasting “robust double-digit growth” for 2010

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Organic wins led the firm’s growth, with new business from Medicis and Sanofi

Added work from Teva for Miproa, a vaginal ring to help couples conceive

Hired 29 employees in the past year, including Liz Czerny to lead the market development practice

**CHALLENGE**

Expanding its business into non-pharma health sectors

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

# Euro RSCG Life MetaMax

Euro’s largest firm stays on course for ‘robust’ growth with strong organic wins



Formed eight years ago to house the network’s Sanofi-Aventis business, Euro RSCG Life MetaMax is now the largest shop in the Euro RSCG Life network, if only by a hair. The agency parlayed its unified “Agency of the future” promise into what’s forecast to be “robust double-digit growth” for 2010 while continuing to build its digital capacity.

MetaMax hired 29 people over the past 12 months, raising headcount to 146. The shop did so on strong organic growth, for the most part, with the majority of that coming from areas outside of the traditional agency mix of creative and branding.

“It’s given us an opportunity to invest in lots of types of talent,” says Euro RSCG Life Worldwide managing partner and MetaMax president Doug Burcin, “particularly digital people, with multiple digital strategists. We’ve made investments in account planning, in market development and payer talent. That’s where the growth has accelerated, and by selling strategy more and being able to satisfy client needs with services in those areas, we’ve been able to invest and hire some real talent.”

About four in 10 of the new hires have come from outside of healthcare, says Burcin. The agency has been looking to consumer agencies as well as to the entertainment industry, even the automotive and finance worlds for talent. “It’s people who are accus-

tomed to looking at different types of problems and bring in some of the types of solutions they’ve used in other markets and helping us ‘pharmacize’ them,” says Burcin.

Among the senior hires were former Sanofi exec Liz Czerny, who was brought on to lead the market development practice, and Joyce Hoffman, who heads the managed markets practice. Zubin Khan joined from Saatchi & Saatchi Healthcare Advertising to lead the account planning function, and Jatinder Singh joined from Universal McCann to lead the CRM and analytics function.

About 40% of the firm’s business is with Sanofi, including Lantus, a global blockbuster thrice over, as well as Apidra and the company’s GLP-1 diabetes candidate, lixisenatide. The agency also handles Sanofi’s blood glucose meters and some pipeline projects globally. Biogen Idec’s MS brands are MetaMax’s next-largest piece of business, including Tysabri and Avonex, followed by Merck, which became a client through its acquisition of Schering-Plough. MetaMax is currently launching Merck’s Saphris in the US, and will be working on the launch globally. Another key client is Medtronic, for which MetaMax handles the cardiac rhythm disease management area brands.

This year, the agency picked up business with Teva, for Miproa, a vaginal ring. MetaMax also landed several pieces of business with Medicis, including fillers Dysport and Restylane and LipoSonic, a fat-zapping device in development.

Burcin estimates that about a third of the agency’s



**Above: A journal ad for Merck’s Saphris; Left: Part of a professional disease state awareness ad for Sanofi**

work is now in creative and branding, with digital/CRM making up another quarter, market development 20% and managed markets and PR around 10%. It’s probably the most global of the Euro RSCG Life agencies, he says, with two-thirds of its business having a global component.

Going forward, the agency hopes to push further into non-pharma health sectors including devices and diagnostics, insurance, biotech, consumer packaged goods, OTC meds and hospital networks. “The broader health and wellness world is a tremendous opportunity,” says Burcin. “The more specialized a client is—oncology, niche markets, high medical need—the greater the opportunity.” —*Matthew Arnold*

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—Doug Burcin