



AT THE HELM

Bill Drummy, chairman and CEO

PERFORMANCE

Revenue up 25% in 2009

HIGHLIGHTS

Added more work from Amgen, GlaxoSmith-Kline, Sanofi-Aventis and Schering-Plough (Merck)

Won business from Bayer/Onyx, Cephalon, Genentech and Inspiration

Staff grew by 20% with some key promotions

Moved into 14,000-square foot space in Tribeca

CHALLENGE

Separating itself from Heartbeat Software

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 173

Heartbeat Digital

Firm looks to increase its service offerings, break away from digital title



Hearbeat Digital may soon drop the Digital from its title, but the agency won't take its finger off the pulse of the discipline.

As a speaker at FDA's social media hearings last November, CEO Bill Drummy challenged regulators to simplify risk information for patients, and ditch the kind of "encyclopedic" postscripts printed in "mouse type" that "no one reads." Drummy also advocated for new and simpler ways for patients to report adverse events, suggesting that "we have to use technology as the answer to the problem that technology, in part, helped to create."

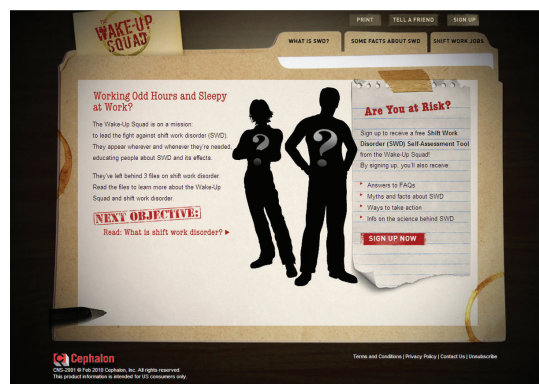
In the meantime, Heartbeat Digital has expanded work with mainstay clients including Amgen, GlaxoSmithKline, Sanofi-Aventis and Schering-Plough, now a part of Merck. Drummy says the agency picked up a big piece of business with GSK, but isn't allowed to disclose the specific brand. With Sanofi-Aventis, Heartbeat will continue working in the allergy sector—the agency handled "design and technical work," including the brand.com site, for a Xyzal campaign that launched

last spring—but also picked up a "cross-brand, corporate level" assignment on the professional side, and a mobile strategy project, says Janelle Starr, VP of marketing solutions at Heartbeat. Agency revenues were up 25% in 2009, according to Drummy.

New business wins include work on Nexavar, a kidney and liver cancer drug from Bayer and Onyx Pharmaceuticals, as well as assignments with Cephalon, Genentech and Inspiration biopharmaceuticals.

As the agency undergoes a rebranding exercise—complete with new logo, identity and a "change in the way we talk about ourselves to clients," staffers are free to mind-meld in Heartbeat's new uber-interactive office, a 14,000 square foot space in the Tribeca neighborhood of Manhattan. Heartbeat Digital and its software company, Heartbeat Software, parted ways in December 2009, and are now legally separated. Drummy says "different visions, sales models and ways of going to the market" between the two units were confusing to clients. Heartbeat Software held on to the Park Avenue office, and Heartbeat Digital moved into its "high-tech, high-touch" digs on Hudson Street in May.

The agency hopes to use its new office space to expand service offerings, eventually including in-house broadcast production. Drummy says the agency produces video for the web, but the "next step for us is to move into the broadcast arena," adding that a client recently asked the agency to consider an AOR assignment across all channels. "We're trying to define ourselves more broadly. Our core digital strength is enormous, but we see ourselves as also having real strength in creative and strategy...we may not want to limit ourselves by having the name 'digital' in our title."



Above: An unbranded disease awareness ad from Cephalon; Top: An iPhone app for Crohn's & Me

Heartbeat Digital has a total headcount of 72. Drummy says that number represents growth of around 20%. Nardine Leonard, Heartbeat's former head of strategy, was promoted to head of strategic client services, where she is "essentially running all of client services as well as strategy," says Drummy. Janelle Starr was promoted from VP, production to VP, marketing solutions. Heartbeat brought in a new director of technology, Jessica Cristani, and filled Starr's old position as director of production with Claudia Riegelhaupt, a four-year veteran of the agency. —Ben Comer

"We may not want to limit ourselves by having 'digital' in our title"

—Bill Drummy