



**AT THE HELM**  
Garnett Dezember,  
president

**PERFORMANCE**  
Ended the year “flat”

**HIGHLIGHTS**  
New wins came in from  
Seattle Genetics, Biodesix  
and Millennium

Continued work for Ge-  
nentech, Tarceva and OSI

Headcount increased to  
60 and office space was  
expanded

Expanded its operating  
model with new division,  
Axcelo MSL Solutions

**CHALLENGE**  
Put Interphase Bioconsulting  
on back burner

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

**“Clients realize  
we can’t market  
products the  
same way we  
have for the last  
30-plus years”**

—Garnett Dezember

# The Navicor Group

After a ‘holding year,’ revenue is  
trending up, new business rolling in



**Journal ad for OSI Pharmaceuticals in support of  
Tarceva for non-small cell lung and pancreatic cancer**

The Navicor Group president Garnett Dezember describes 2009 as “a holding year.” The Columbus, Ohio-based inVentiv agency, which is focused on oncology and immunology, ended the year flat. Dezember says the agency retained all clients, but the uncertain economic environment challenged many of them early in the year.

“We saw some conservative approaches through 2009,” Dezember explains. “At the end of 2009, new business really picked up and led us into 2010. Now most clients or potential clients feel more comfortable about moving into investment, and they’re being less apprehensive about the healthcare environment.”

A lot of new business is coming from companies preparing to launch new products, rather than from companies with mature products that are looking to change agencies. Dezember says the agency’s specialty expertise attracts many of those types of clients.

“[Companies launching new products] don’t want to gamble with more general agencies,” he explains. “In oncology alone, there are 600 products in clinical

trials, and we’re beginning to see more and more of those products [nearing] commercialization. We have a lot of appeal for those kinds of companies. Everyone would like to be on the ground floor of launching because you can build those relationships. If you can maintain a relationship, you have the opportunity to partner with clients from birth through maturity. That’s the expectation we have.”

New wins last year included a pipeline product for the treatment of Hodgkin’s lymphoma (SGN-35) from Seattle Genetics; an EGFR therapy from Biodesix (VeriStrat) for patients with non-small cell lung cancer; and a nonbranded awareness program for Millennium: The Takeda Oncology Company (multiple myeloma).

AOR work continued with new campaigns for Genentech’s Xeloda (breast cancer and colorectal cancer) and Tarceva (non-small cell lung and pancreatic cancer). And, OSI Pharmaceuticals, developer and joint marketer of Tarceva, asked the agency to work on additional projects in support of Tarceva.

The agency’s operating model, based on an oncology/immunology focus, expanded last year with the addition of Axcelo MSL Solutions, a new division that provides oncology medical affairs consulting and support in clinical trial recruitment. Another division, Interphase Bioconsulting, was put on the back burner because Dezember says its clients are well-served between Navicor Communications (the advertising arm) and Axcelo.

Headcount has increased from about 54, ending 2009, to about 60 now (with no layoffs), and the agency took over additional office space. Joining last year were Richard D’Ginto, vice president, creative director, and Michael Casarella, regional medical science liaison director. Dezember plans to hire aggressively this year. He says the agency’s collegial cultural and specialized focus appeals many candidates. And, he adds that the agency’s Midwest locale is also attractive to people raising families.

Dezember notes that clients operating in specialty areas have adopted digital communication rapidly. He’s continuing to build the agency’s digital expertise and offerings.

“Clients realize we can’t market products the same way we have for the last 30-plus years,” he adds. “The question is how to best use and optimize new technology.”

Overall business is trending up, and 2010 revenue is expected to exceed 2009 revenue. In addition to the AOR win from Seattle Genetics, the agency also won a chronic kidney disease pipeline product (Peginesatide) this year from Affymax and Takeda.

Dezember will continue to diversify the client roster within oncology/hematology and immunology. He’s also focused on driving Axcelo’s success and further expanding overall offerings.

“Navicor is a business platform we can use to provide additional services to clients,” he adds. “We’re constantly on the lookout for how we can expand capability.” — Tanya Lewis