



AT THE HELM

Jay Bolling, president and CEO

PERFORMANCE

2009 was a "great year"

HIGHLIGHTS

Jay Bolling took over principal position from founder John Roska

Added work from Pfizer (Prevar 13 vaccine) and Actelion (Tracleer)

Notable hires include account directors Kimberly Clotman and Jennifer Scheel; Chris Taormina, executive director, digital services; and Joe Vitale, creative director

CHALLENGE

Pharma consolidation

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

"One of the things we firmly believe is that digital is not a strategy—digital is a channel"

—Jay Bolling

Roska Healthcare Advertising

Nearing its 30th anniversary, shop looks to the future in terms of handling growth

It may be a surprise to hear Jay Bolling, president and CEO of Roska Healthcare Advertising, an agency with just shy of three decades' worth of advertising experience under its belt declare, "We are now 100% healthcare."

However, the concentration of the Montgomeryville, PA's shop on pharma marketing, exclusively, did not fully take hold until 2000.

Bolling, who took over the agency's principal position from founder John Roska in February of this year, explains how Roska Healthcare's roots in what he describes as a "very traditional, direct-response advertising agency" amalgamate perfectly with the shop's digital capabilities: "As an agency, what really makes us unique is the fact that having these direct roots, and... overlaying that with the brand expertise and experience in healthcare, provides a three-part combination. [It] allows us to diffuse brand, direct and digital into a really different approach to the market, and be a lot more efficient in our efforts to target our audiences to the exclusion of all others."

Though owned by Elixir Advertising, the shop's professional range stems from its three divisions—its namesake, Roska Healthcare Advertising, as well as Roska Digital Advertising and Roska Direct Advertising.

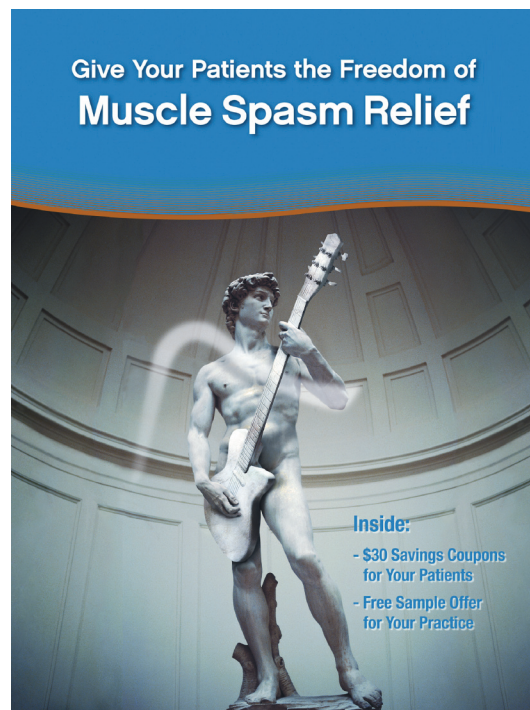
Referring to 2009 as "a great year" for Roska (though, unfortunately, declining to discuss the agency's revenue), Bolling highlighted six new account

wins—including business with Pfizer's Prevnar 13 vaccine, and Actelion Pharmaceuticals' Tracleer, for the treatment of pulmonary arterial hypertension—which allowed the agency to "expand on [its] capabilities and bring in multiple new clients in different categories."

Additional staff was also welcomed to Roska's executive team: account directors Kimberly Clotman and Jennifer Scheel; Chris Taormina, executive director, digital services; and Joe Vitale, creative director. In total, Roska's personnel count totaled 48 at the end of last year, up from 36 in 2008.

So far in 2010, Bolling says the agency has already brought on 15 new staff, and is actively hiring, at present, through social media, among other channels.

One challenge that Bolling has noticed affecting agencies on an industry-wide scale is pharma consolidation. However, the president notes these changes have a hint of a silver-lining. He explains:



Above: An unbranded detail aid for Cephalon's Amrix, indicated to help control and relieve muscle spasm

"The interesting part about the recession, on the downside, is that, I think, it really created a greater awareness among senior management in the healthcare industry and pharmaceutical companies, to say, 'We can't just keep throwing money at the problem.' So, they really started looking at the ways that they can do this differently—What are ways we can be more efficient and more targeted?"

Bolling confesses: "One of the things we firmly believe, is that digital is not a strategy—digital is a channel. We're very audience-centric in our approach, so what we look to do is once we define our target audience, we look at where we can then intercept them and engage them." —Lauren Folino