



**AT THE HELM**  
Brad Oleshansky, CEO

**PERFORMANCE**  
Steady growth of 12-13% from 2009 to 2010

**HIGHLIGHTS**  
Rolling out new brand, Meredith Health

Hired seven key people, including its expanded leadership team: Scott Stern, Mike Lee, Jennifer Janus, Ivan Holtz and Caryn Rainey

Digital CRM program, Brilliant Distinctions, for Allergan products

**CHALLENGE**  
Generating awareness to companies that aren't aware of Big

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

**"We were looking for a strategic partner that could help us deliver solutions that were unique"**

—Brad Oleshansky

## Big Communications

Meredith subsidiary continues steady growth, rolls out new health brand



Though he shies away from categorizing Detroit-headquartered shop Big Communications as a "traditional" ad agency, CEO Brad Oleshansky maintains the company's unique character lends to its identity of being a "project-based agency" with a "multichannel approach." And, ever since the company became a wholly owned subsidiary of media and marketing conglomerate Meredith Corporation in 2008, Oleshansky has worked to reinforce this claim.

Reflecting back on the characteristics that defined the latter-half of the 2000s for the pharma industry, Oleshansky expresses the conflation he felt running an agency that was reporting "dramatic growth year-over-year, 30-40% growth," in the midst of a turbulent marketplace that centered on agency consolidation and buyouts. Though Big received no shortage of calls from "private equity guys and holding companies" during this time, Oleshansky admits that agency principals wanted to explore opportunities from a more strategic perspective. "We weren't interested in doing the traditional thing—either making lots of money for a private equity group, or working for a holding company—so when Meredith presented their story to us, it was very interesting, because we were looking for a strategic partner that could help us deliver solutions that were

unique in the marketplace," Oleshansky explains. "At the time, we were focusing on what we call sales force effectiveness, and non-personal promotion, which is direct-to-physician marketing. By partnering with Meredith, we saw an opportunity not only to burst through those capabilities but also to grow a consumer practice that was very unique and memorable."

Since the Meredith acquisition, the staff headcount has topped out at about 100—in addition to Big's Michigan headquarters, the agency has six satellite offices spread from coast to coast—and while modest in comparison with its early years in healthcare, the agency enjoyed steady growth of 12-13% from 2009 to 2010, reporting net revenue of more than \$30 million, according to the CEO.

The agency's leadership team has also expanded in the past few years, including: Scott Stern, EVP, client solutions; Mike Lee, VP of finance; Jennifer Janus, VP, operations; Ivan Holtz, VP, client solutions; and, Caryn Rainey, VP, talent and organization development, to name a few.

These days, Big's product offering focuses on "Healthcare Relationship Management" via sales forces, non-personal promotion and consumer marketing, with a focus on CRM. Oleshansky says the agency also does things like "multicultural marketing, and social, mobile and data analytics," by tapping into the resources of Meredith Integrated Marketing sister agencies and extended enterprise digital platforms.

While Oleshansky says client work skews toward the professional side, its biggest client is a consumer account



**Above: A website for Novo Nordisk's FlexPen suite of products; top: Skin care articles in a consumer mag**

with Allergan, for products Botox, Juvéderm, Latisse and Natrelle breast implants: "It's a [digital] CRM program called Brilliant Distinctions.... Basically, it's a point-of-face program for cosmetic procedures."

On plans for the year ahead, Oleshansky says: "We're rolling out a new brand called Meredith Health. That's actually one of the most exciting things that's going to be happening in the next year—that continued alignment of all aspects across the Meredith Corporation, as well as Big and our sister agencies, to be run by us at Big, under a banner called Meredith Health."

—Lauren Folino