



AT THE HELM

Steve Rothman, president and CCO; Buzz Woods, EVP, sales and marketing; and Jeff Bogursky, CEO and CFO

PERFORMANCE

Tough year of repositioning and rebranding

HIGHLIGHTS

Added GE Healthcare, Bausch & Lomb, Delcath Systems, Sanofi and Forest Labs to its roster

Grew organically with longtime clients EMD Serono and Amgen

Lunched Nplate

CHALLENGE

Getting clients to recognize its new identity/image

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

“No matter what was going on here, job one was to serve our clients”

—Steve Rothman

Cell Division

Two highly regarded agencies form new shop, with great success



Over the last year and change, Cell Division found itself in a most unusual position: blowing its own horn. The reason for the noisemaking was a name change, with the firm folding CCG Metamedia—founded in 1985—and strategy/med ed unit Quicksilver Science into a single do-it-all agency.

“2010 was the launch, which means 2011 is, at least in theory, the repositioning and rebranding year,” says Cell Division president and chief creative officer Steve Rothman. “But we see it as more than that. It’s really the birth of something new.”

The name change and rebirth/rebranding had been in the works for some time. Entering its mid-20s, the agency believed the old names didn’t reflect its current skill set. Whereas CCG and Quicksilver were highly regarded as distinct entities, Rothman wanted to better position the firms as “a life sciences agency built for the digital world.” To that end, it needed to break down any and all silos....

“At first, the idea for Cell Division was to be a holding company for several companies,” Rothman explains. “But how much sense does that make? I’m not sure the industry has been well served by the trend toward multiple units. An agency is an agency.”

The name change brought with it several challenges. Cell Division made the switch incrementally, first switching over back-end processes and later pushing

forward with the public unveiling. Not surprisingly, this caused its share of headaches. “In some places, we were known or listed as two different things. It took some time,” Rothman admits.

While it’s down a bit in headcount—in the 40-50 range—Rothman stresses that the agency hasn’t wavered in its mindset, values or client commitment. “No matter what was going on here, job one was to serve our clients.”

Judging by the results, Cell Division succeeded in that goal. Additions to the firm’s client roster included GE Healthcare (for ultrasound contrast agent Optison; CD has been charged with creating iPad detail programs for reps) and Bausch & Lomb (for conjunctivitis treatment Besivance). The agency also scored business from Delcath Systems (for an oncology device/drug combination approved in Europe), Phadia (for autoimmune disease diagnostics), Sanofi (for diabetes drug Lantus) and Forest Laboratories (for Teflaro, an anti-infective).

In addition, Cell Division continued to expand relationships with two longstanding clients. EMD Serono added lipodystrophy drug Egrifta to the agency’s slate, which also includes digital AOR status (tablet promotion) for Rebif. To the existing work Cell Division already does on Neulasta, Prolia and Vectibix, Amgen added Nplate (for hematological disease).

It’s that last one which Rothman identifies as a particularly interesting addition to the client roster, owing to both the science and marketing challenges. “The same reps who were selling Xgeva were also selling Nplate, so the challenge was ‘What can we do



Above: A website for Amgen’s Nplate; Top: An iPad-optimized interactive site for Amgen’s Neulasta

to ensure that the share of voice for our product isn’t lost during the Xgeva launch?”

The “surround sound” approach Cell Division adopted, which tapped multiple digital channels, struck a chord. Nplate launched last August and has seen double-digit sales growth quarter over quarter. “In many cases, physicians were prescribing this drug without having met with a rep,” Rothman says. “What that showed us was that you can build and maintain relationships with physicians through digital channels; some physicians actually prefer it that way. That was a huge eye-opener for us.” —Larry Dobrow