

**AT THE HELM**

Jay Bigelow, president

PERFORMANCE

2010 revenue was up overall compared to 2009

HIGHLIGHTS

Landed five new wins at the end of 2010 and 12 wins overall, including organic business from Auxilium, Novartis, United Therapeutics and Merck

Named AOR for two new clients

Invested in senior talent, adding Joe Soto, John Hamilton, Connie Mester and Don Martiny to staff

CHALLENGE

Improving approach to marketing life sciences

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see *Agency A-to-Z*, beginning on page 169

“There’s forward momentum in the kinds of work we’re doing and the size of work we’re doing”

—Jay Bigelow

MicroMass Communications

Building on end-of-year momentum, racking up wins and AOR assignments

After a down year in 2009 and a slow start to 2010, business picked up considerably for MicroMass Communications during the second half of the year. Though he declines to reveal specifics, president Jay Bigelow reports 2010 revenue was up overall compared to 2009. The agency landed five new wins in a row at the end of the year, and momentum has continued with Q1 2011 revenue up 50% compared to Q4 2010.

Based in Cary, NC, MicroMass is a full-service agency deeply rooted in behavioral science. Bigelow says applying behavioral science helps the agency provide all clients with smarter approaches, and he adds that it will become the “prerequisite to good marketing” in the world of personalized medicine.

The agency landed 12 wins last year, including great organic growth from Auxilium (preapproval work in Xiaflex); Bayer (two devices); Novartis (Sandostatin); United Therapeutics (a patient education and support program for its PAH franchise); and Merck, (a global assignment for Gardasil).

New clients included New American Therapeutics, which awarded AOR work spanning corporate development for the newly established company and promotion of its sole product—cold sore treatment Denavir. Physicians Pharmacy Alliance, which Bigelow says has never done any marketing at all, also selected MicroMass as AOR.

Other wins included Takeda’s Edarbi (blood pressure); Talecris’ Gamunex (CIDP, PI, ITP); digital work for B. Braun; and global work for Quintiles. Promotion

stopped on Shire’s Fosrenol and Merck’s Singulair.

“There’s forward momentum in the kinds of work we’re doing and the size of work we’re doing,” Bigelow says. “Takeda is a great example. Edarbi is head and shoulders above anything that’s out there, and we built a platform they can use for a long time.”

Bigelow adds that insight into metabolic mindset (on which MicroMass had released a white paper) contributed to the Edarbi win.

In addition to the oft-cited industry challenges (regulatory, etc.), Bigelow believes the general approach to marketing for the life sciences can be greatly improved.

“The challenge is in getting marketing people to understand that companies are launching brands not molecules,” he explains. “Marketing professionals need to do a better job educating clients on what marketing is about and the value of creating strong brands. P&G has a strong discipline of teaching good marketing, but that philosophy and approach doesn’t permeate pharma. I think we’ll see successful companies have more and more of that.”

Somewhat surprisingly, given the agency’s location, Bigelow says he hasn’t had trouble recruiting talent. Significant investment was made in senior talent last year, including Joe Soto, EVP account management and John Hamilton, SVP group account director; and



Above: A professional ad for New American Therapeutics’ Denavir, for the treatment of cold sores

Connie Mester, business development director. Don Martiny, VP group creative director, is among 2011 new hires.

“New senior talent moved here,” Bigelow adds. “You have to be an agency doing great work—we’ve crossed that threshold—and North Carolina is a great place to live.”

Headcount is standing at 65, up about 15 since the beginning of 2010. There are currently human resources, creative and account openings. Bigelow expects to add maybe 10 more employees by the end of the year.

“We’re expecting a significant uptake in revenue this year compared to last year,” he adds. “We still have several new business opportunities in the works that will continue to fuel growth.” —Tanya Lewis