



AT THE HELM

L-R: Marcia Goddard, EVP, creative director; Marci Piasecki, CEO; and Tatiana Lyons, SVP, director of client services

PERFORMANCE

2011 forecast flattened by two CRLs

HIGHLIGHTS

Secured GSK biz after consolidation, adding Relovair and oncology business plus Teva MS pill

Additional work added in 2010: Jazz's Xyrem and Valeant's Zovirax

No accounts lost

CHALLENGE

Recovering after CRLs and losing Plavix to expiry

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

"Not only have we made our way back to where we were, we have a shot...of growing again"

—Marci Piasecki

Torre Lazur McCann

Finished 25% ahead in 2010, but FDA threw a wrench in 2011 plans

For many of us, October 11, 2010, passed like any other work day. For Torre Lazur McCann, the day brought an unexpected turn in the business. On that auspicious Monday, the FDA issued not one but two complete response letters for TLM roster brands—Jazz Pharma's JZP-6 for fibromyalgia, and Adasuve, a treatment for schizophrenic or bipolar agitation that was co-developed by Alexza and Valeant Pharma.

The FDA called for new studies on both of these neurology drugs, essentially putting TLM, which is one of the flagship agencies in Interpublic Group's McCann Healthcare Worldwide network, out of the game. "We knew where we stood...that's the way it goes sometimes," says CEO Marci Piasecki.

JZP-6 and Adasuve helped the agency finish the year up 25%, but their hold-up flattened its 2011 forecast and the agency's Plavix work had been winding down as the Bristol-Myers Squibb/Sanofi anti-platelet blockbuster approaches patent expiry in 2012.

"Getting two CRLs in one day on brands you hoped to be launching would rattle anyone's cage," says Piasecki, but her crew gained most of the revenue back in new business. A big break came when holding company IPG came out a winner in GlaxoSmithKline's creative consolidation in late 2010.

TLM had already had a long-standing relationship with GSK, but the review gave all three Torre Lazur Healthcare Group shops—TLM, echo Torre Lazur, and Torre Lazur Managed Markets—"a great opportunity to show an old client new tricks," Piasecki says, specifi-

cally "how we've evolved with digital and managed markets and our strategic business unit."

TLM not only secured its GSK business but pitched and won GSK's phase III Relovair, the heir apparent to asthma/COPD blockbuster Advair; and GSK global oncology business that includes a BRAF inhibitor and a MEK inhibitor. The team also leveraged its neurology expertise to land a global AOR assignment for Teva's phase III MS pill laquinimod, including professional and DTC/DTP work in the US and elsewhere.

"All of that together really helped to put us in a nice position after all," recounts Piasecki. TLM could still finish 2011 flat, but she's optimistic: "Not only have we made our way back to where we were, we have a shot...of growing once again."

Talent working on the brands was redeployed to other business from Jazz (Xyrem) and Valeant (Zovirax), both won in 2010, while other staffers were shifted to sister agencies. TLM headcount stands at 153, about 10 more than last year.

Above: A professional educational ad, for Boehringer Ingelheim, promoting the HbA1c test for mellitus

Not losing any accounts has helped keep staff engaged. TLM handles a good percentage of GSK business—the respiratory and oncology franchises, BPH drug Avodart and follow-on Jalyn, plus the dermatology line through subsidiary Stiefel's portfolio, as well as UCB's epilepsy add-on Vimpat. TLM's strategic business unit has been working on customer insight assignments, and Active Ingredient—the interactive division—has seen business pick up.

While she is proud of her team's resilience, Piasecki says the 2010 tumult has made her gun-shy. "It's hard to forecast against that kind of stuff...My philosophy is to never become a victim of it." —Marc Iskowitz