

# Turning up the



Top: *Medical Economics'* focus is on helping doctors stay in practice; right: Advanstar's healthcare portfolio has its online hub at ModernMedicine.com

## 2011 HIGHLIGHTS

Ad revenue, year to October 2011  
**\$11.6M**

Increase in ad revenue, year to October 2011 vs. 2010  
**38.8%**

Number of ad pages, year to October 2011  
**955.7**

Increase in ad pages, year to October 2011 vs. 2010  
**38.4%**

Published since 1923, *Medical Economics* is the flagship of Advanstar's healthcare portfolio—reaching more than 175,000 office-based PCPs and cardiologists twice a month, helping them succeed by covering a wide range of topics.

EVP, chief administration officer Tom Ehardt and EVP Georgiann Decenzo took the reins of Advanstar's medical communications group after a reorganization in 2010. Their drive to reinvigorate *Medical Economics* spurred an impressive resurgence.

For first-half 2011, Kantar Media reports ad revenue surged 51% to \$7.1 million, with ad pages up 49.6% to 393.5 vs. first-half 2010. Year to October 2011, ad revenue rose 38.8% to \$11.6 million, and ad pages were up 38.4% to 955.7.

VP, group publisher Ken Sylvia also notes a 3.9% increase in average issue readership score (June 2011 vs. June

# page volume

2010), well above the 1% average increase. For the same period, associate publisher Debby Savage adds, market share was higher than average, while overall medical/surgical publication revenue increased 9% in 2010.

“Coming out of a tough media recession, our CEO and board wanted to further invest in the healthcare division [given] market growth potential and [our] strong portfolio,” explains Decenzo, who was promoted in January 2008. “With my focus on marketing, editorial and research and Tom’s sales background and 25-plus years in healthcare, our CEO thought we would make a great team.”

“Through the recession and tough times *Medical Economics* lost [its] leadership position,” says Ehardt, who was SVP of operations and CFO of The Medical Economics Company (which owned some of Advanstar’s current healthcare titles) from the late 1980s through the 1990s. “We shared a vision of [restoring that] position. Every aspect of our business was refocused [on] understanding what readers and advertisers want and delivering it.”

Ehardt went face-to-face with agency and pharma clients, hired Sylvia (who had run Jobson’s medical publishing business) and recruited more market experts, increasing Advanstar’s medical communications sales staff from two to 18. Savage, who was promoted last September, and Ana Santiso, who joined in December 2010, are dedicated to *Medical Economics*.

“We made our promise, took [clients’] input and delivered on our promise and with that came the nice ad revenue increase,” Ehardt says.

Decenzo “went deep” on content and marketing, getting physician input about how to best reinvigorate the brand. “We brought in a PCP consul-

tant, began to engage other PCPs and honed into our focus, which is to help doctors stay in practice,” she explains. “We got some industry notice, and I think that drove ad pages.”

In May, the e-newsletter — now called *Medical Economics eConsult* — was revamped with fresh content (available online). Its frequency went from twice a month to weekly. Decenzo says the changes drove a 50% open-rate increase over 2010.

Advanstar’s healthcare portfolio is conglomerated online at *ModernMedicine.com*. Savage says digital edition readership was up 20% over 2010.

A redesign of *MedicalEconomics.com* is due this summer. While emphasis on the branded site will increase, the conglomerated network will stay the underlying platform. Decenzo says the branded-site model will help drive deeper brand engagement and still afford clients exposure to multiple audiences. The new website will be mobile-friendly, with mobile apps coming soon.

Customer feedback has been positive, Ehardt notes. The team plans continued customer engagement and expects double-digit growth in both ad sales and revenue. — *Tanya Lewis*

EVP, chief administrative officer Tom Ehardt, and EVP Georgiann Decenzo

