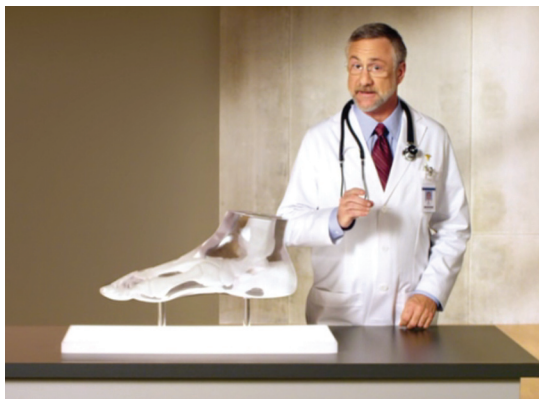


GSW Worldwide

Tweaking a business strategy while
keeping core values consistent



“GSW is more than willing to press the boundaries of what it sees as possible”

—Joe Daley

GSW Worldwide has, in many ways, reached the dawn of a new era. Recent months have seen a change of leadership on both sides of the pond, following the departures of both Phil Deschamps, who had been president and CEO for 13 years, and European president Angela Liedler.

And sadly, towards the end of 2011, the Westerville, OH-based shop lost one of its beloved founders when Bob Gerbig passed away, aged 66.

GSW is tweaking its business strategy, too, with a push to diversify its client base, extend its strategic capabilities and collaborate more with its inVentiv Health siblings.

Nevertheless, the agency’s identity and its core values remain very much intact.

“GSW continues to be what it has been historically... namely, a highly entrepreneurial organization that is more than willing to press the boundaries of what it sees as possible,” asserts Joe Daley, who recently took the reins as president and CEO. “No matter what our ownership construct happens to be, that spirit remains

alive and very much at the core of who we are.”

Daley says GSW is now leveraging the inVentiv Health family and infrastructure “in a more organized” way to buttress its presence outside the US major markets. “That’s proven to create some important momentum,” he says, “particularly in Europe, where it’s common for advertising spend to be a lower percent of overall commercial spend, and where medical education and PR are stronger components of spend.”

As the leading agency of the inVentiv family, GSW continues to be at the forefront of driving collaboration and new possibilities with its siblings, says Daley, citing important projects in the area of patient engagement and compliance.

So how well is GSW performing? While declining to give year-on-year numbers, Daley reports a 10%-11% compounded annual growth over the past three years and adds that the agency has “accomplished quite a bit on the client front in the spirit of new wins, new therapeutic categories and different kinds of organizations.”

In 2011, GSW won 22 new pieces of business from 10 clients. A particularly pleasing win for Daley was new client Mylan, which had consolidated from more than 20 agencies to just one.

“They’re an exciting organization that is not just in the generic space, but also in the branded space, and they’re also extremely active in the reinvention of their own brand,” he notes. “That partnership is incredibly diverse for us. We’re operating at the master brand level, we’re operating behind their branded products and we’re operating with them in markets around the world.”

An important recent win in Daley’s eyes was Biogen in the MS space. “They have an incredibly exciting asset in the pipeline—it’s an oral therapy that promises to offer an important improvement for patients living with MS,” he says.

What began as a professional assignment has since migrated to encompass consumer too. “We’re finding, not just from a purely revenue perspective but from a brand creation perspective, that the best place for a manufacturer to be is with that single partner connecting all of the customer stakeholders together.”

Bruce Rooke, chief creative officer at GSW Worldwide, explains the philosophy. “We’ve always been strong believers that a [treatment] decision is not made in isolation,” he says. “What happens is that a dialogue takes place, so it’s more about equipping [both doctor and patient] with the right tools, so that each can complete the sentence in that examination room. And it’s easier to do that when you have both [professional and consumer work].”

Rooke says it’s often about making clients understand that, firstly, physicians are consumers, too, and so you need so reach them outside of the usual HCP channels; and second, that by doing this, you will benefit the corporate brand.

Similarly, at the end of 2011, GSW picked up the consumer work for Lilly’s Humalog, which Daley describes as “an important evolution in that relationship.”

Yet another consumer win saw the agency pick up DTC for Stryker's knee replacement products. Daley just saw the first commercial air on TV and is very pleased with what he saw. "It's not just the creative work that grabs you, it's really the insight," he says. "This is a product that's been around and not blowing the doors off, so we came in with a new insight and renamed it. We led off with that. It's been everything from the strategic insight all the way up to re-launching it, and very effectively so."

Rooke is especially proud of a series of short films for Lilly Oncology. The first, called "The Moment," was released in April and is a powerful and emotional depiction of a patient seeing his oncologist for the first time. "Without a narrator, without an announcer and without dialogue, it stops right at that moment of diagnosis and decision," he says. "That's really where Lilly Oncology steps in with everything they do."

The silent films will target only healthcare profes-



"The Moment," a short film made for Lilly Oncology (opposite) and an ad for Humalog (above)

sionals for now, but again, Rooke hopes the work will crossover into the consumer space.

Another of his creative picks is the awareness effort GSW did for the National Bone Health Alliance (NBHA). "The issue they brought to us was that we have all of these people who are 50 and older, breaking their arms or breaking their hips or breaking their wrists," he explains. "But what happens is they get it set in an ER and go home none the smarter. They don't realize that bone density is probably the main issue in a majority of these situations, so we need to wake people up to that fact."

While the campaign included some print ads, the main event was... well, an event. In order to convey the huge number of breaks per day caused by bone density, GSW designed and built Cast Mountain—a gigantic installation made out of hundreds of casts—and erected it at various medical conventions around the country. Of course, having already been a hit with the client, Rooke is hoping that Cast Mountain will be extended into the consumer arena. "It's an ongoing process," he says. "But the clients know that the message really has to get to consumers."

The nature of some of the work described above suggests a shift to an increasingly varied and innova-



AT THE HELM

Joe Daley, president and CEO

PERFORMANCE

Agency has had compounded annual growth of 10%–11% over the past three years

Won 22 new pieces of business from 10 clients in 2011

HIGHLIGHTS

New leadership in both Europe and the US

An important recent win from Biogen for an oral therapy for patients living with MS

Made a shift to an increasingly varied and innovative workload

Picked up consumer work for Lilly's Humalog, an "important evolution" in GSW's relationship with Lilly

Put together an awareness campaign for the National Bone Health Alliance

Produced a series of short films targeted at HCPs for Lilly Oncology

CHALLENGES

Diversifying the agency's client base, extending its strategic capabilities and collaborating more with inVentiv siblings

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 181

tive workload, with greater integration between media channels and between HCP and consumer audiences. Does this mean that clients are getting more comfortable with new ideas and approaches?

"Well, you still have to create a pretty good sales argument," says Rooke. "You need to show that it's increasing the business they're responsible for, and not just that it's a neat thing to do. I think clients want to go to these places, but they just haven't seen it done in the healthcare space, so we're continuing to amass case studies."



Work for the cystic fibrosis treatment Cayston (top) and the online tool Amplifier

Daley sees clients beginning to embrace the possibility of experimentation enabled through technology. "Different organizations have either established innovation groups—or they're allowing us to bring our innovation group in and pilot and beta test—with a much higher frequency than we saw two or three years ago."

Rooke says that the decision two years ago to dissolve GSW's digital division, and instead give each brand team digital expertise, leaves the agency well-positioned for the changes ahead.

"The old idea that if you build a statue to the brand, then they'll come... that no longer happens," he says. "So brands now have to follow consumers instead of consumers following brand, and we're seeing really great opportunities for brand-driven products and programs." —James Chase