



AT THE HELM

Maureen Franco, chief strategy officer

PERFORMANCE

Staff increased by about 10, and plans for a west coast outpost remain on track

HIGHLIGHTS

Landed significant new AOR work from both BioMarin and Hyperion Therapeutics

Over the next two years, the agency will oversee five launches in the orphan drug space

CHALLENGES

Bankruptcy filing of Inspiration Biopharmaceuticals led to several account losses

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 187

Cambridge BioMarketing

A reorganized management team meets a tough year's challenges

Cambridge BioMarketing's sub-niche, the orphan drug space, may be the one that demands the most specialized experience of any in health-care marketing. So when the agency executed its long-planned leadership transition, the firm made sure nothing was lost amid the hierarchical reshuffling.

Longtime Genzyme exec Maureen Franco had joined the agency in 2011 as chief strategy officer, with the assumption that she'd ease into the CEO slot if the fit proved as snug as expected. It did, and Franco assumed the CEO reins from longtime agency chief Steve West in June 2012. At the same time, Cambridge creative director Mike Hodgson was promoted to assume West's chief creative officer responsibilities. West now holds the post of chairman.

After that successful transition, Cambridge shifted into growth mode, hiring Mark Kaplan as director of digital strategy, Mike Gatti as creative director and the company's first-ever director of operations. And then in late October, Inspiration Biopharmaceuticals, which earlier in the year had chosen Cambridge over a host of suitors for two hemophilia products and corporate work, filed for bankruptcy.

This led to what Franco now calls "a couple of murky months." Cambridge stayed the course, however, keeping staffing levels consistent (head count currently sits in the upper-50s, up around 10 people from the same time last year). "It's a hit to your morale, because you put your blood, sweat and guts into everything you do," she says. "But the hope was that the people we hired would help us replace what we lost."

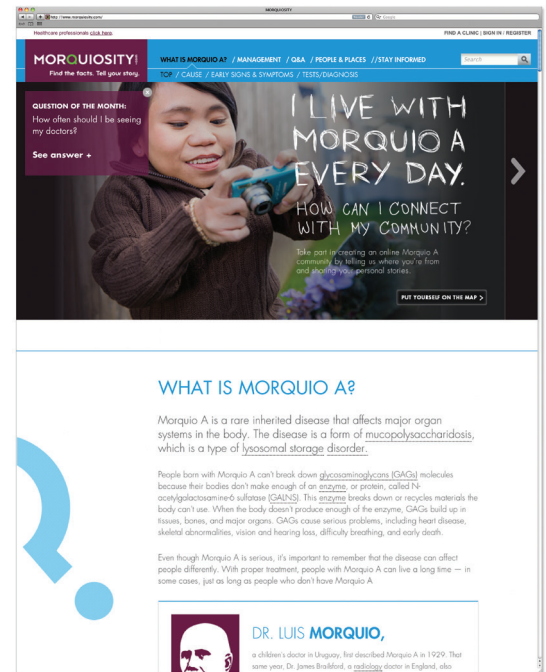
Ultimately they did. Cambridge scored what Franco calls "a dream new client" in BioMarin, which tapped the agency as AOR for the upcoming launch of an MPS4A product. Hyperion Therapeutics, a San Fran-

cisco-based company that just launched its first product, also bestowed AOR status upon Cambridge. Those two wins "got us out of the inspiration hole," Franco reports.

Other new clients include Synageva BioPharma, for a drug that treats Lysosomal Acid Lipase deficiency. Throw in existing work for Alexion Pharmaceuticals (on a Hypophosphatasia treatment) and Amylin Pharmaceuticals (on a Lipodystrophy drug), and the immediate future is going to be quite packed with activity: Over the course of the next two years, Cambridge will oversee five launches in the orphan drug space.

"It's a little daunting, sure," Franco says when asked about the upcoming slate. "But Big Pharma and investors are paying attention to this space now and it's one where we've been for a long time. That's a fortunate thing for us."

In the months ahead, Cambridge might finally take the plunge and either assign an existing staffer or hire a new one to be the proverbial New Business Person. "The joint focus—new business is a part-time job



Cambridge BioMarketing's work include a website offering information on the disease Morquio A

shared by everyone on the management team—is sometimes tough, but our reputation in the orphan space helps open doors. The real challenge is to go on in and win it," Franco says.

The company might have news to report soon about plans to formally open a west coast outpost. West has already moved to San Francisco to work with existing clients in the region. "We're in the early stages of thinking about what a west coast presence would look like, but we want to do it the right way," Franco adds. "We don't want to just throw a couple of account people in a rented room and say, 'Off you go.' We want [the new office] to have our DNA. We want to preserve the culture we have here." — Larry Dobrow

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—Maureen Franco