



AT THE HELM

Renee Wills, president

PERFORMANCE

Nearly doubled its client list last year

HIGHLIGHTS

Won five of six pitches it made in 2012

Executing launches for Novartis and Boehringer Ingelheim with ICC Lowe London

Saw 12% growth from existing clients, which include J&J, BI and AstraZeneca

CHALLENGES

Putting a hold on new business to concentrate on company culture

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

“Trio is starting to establish a reputation in the industry”

—Renee Wills

ICC Lowe Trio

Inspired by its parent company, this agency has forged its own identity



ICC Lowe Trio has managed to escape the fate of those agency spinoffs that forever wear the badge of “conflict shop,” never quite leaving the shadow of their parent company.

The IPG agency has blossomed into a full-service agency with business ranging from Johnson & Johnson and Novartis to Boehringer Ingelheim and AstraZeneca. It boasts low staff turnover and new, larger quarters.

Continuing a trend started a couple years back, ICC Lowe Trio nearly doubled its client list last year. “We won five different opportunities, which is a great hit rate because we only pitched six,” recalls Renee Wills, who was promoted from GM to president in 2012.

Highlights include the global launch of Novartis pipeline drug LCQ908 for high triglycerides and a US/global med-ed launch for BI’s olodaterol/tiotropium respiratory combo. Both launches are being coordinated with ICC Lowe London.

The agency saw 12% growth from existing clients. Trio does professional promotion for J&J’s Acuvue lenses, as well as for J&J OTC products Listerine and Neosporin Essentials, and baby care brand Desitin. Med

ed work includes AZ clot drug Brilinta. Wills says the firm is on-track this year for similar organic growth.

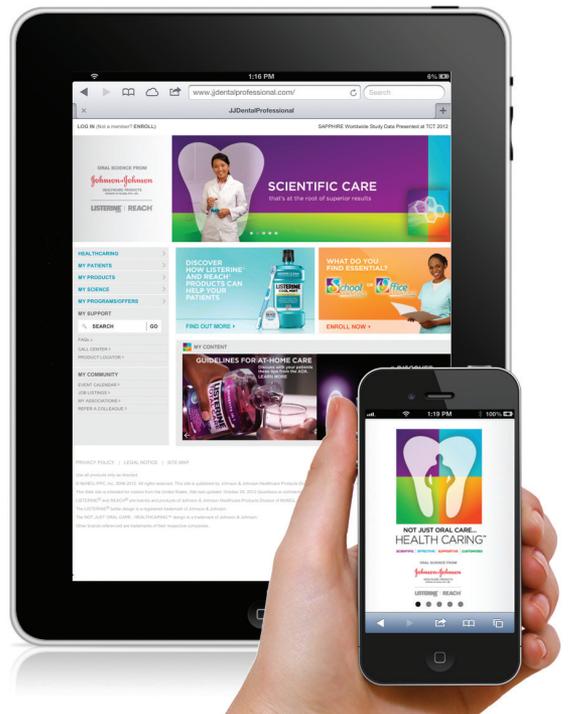
Like its parent, ICC Lowe Trio is guided by a set of principles that puts work-life balance for employees and treating clients properly at the top. But she aspires to make Trio more than a mini ICC. “We had shared resources [but are] now [venturing] forth to have our own dedicated resources so we can thrive.” An example: hiring Sandra Szlachtianchyn, Trio’s first VP/account planner, who came over from WPP’s NYC-based consulting group BAV. The ability to “lure someone from a consumer background” to the wilds of New Jersey (Trio is based in Parsippany) was a coup, says Wills.

“Trio is starting to establish a reputation in the industry, and when people hear about our culture,” she says, “it’s not hard to sell them on the merits of Trio and what we’re doing. They embrace it.” Other key hires included Shuet Moy as SVP/ account supervisor, from Medicus, and Maria Rose as VP/associate creative director copy, from CementBloc. Headcount hovers between 60 and 70, up from 50-60 in 2011.

Wills takes the agency’s core values so seriously that she halted new-business pitching in first-half 2013 so that Trio could focus on connecting better with existing clients and raising the bar internally.

“Taking a pause on new business when you’re hot is the hardest thing to do,” says Steve Viviano, CEO of parent ICC Lowe. However, it was a necessary thing to do. Wills says she made a conscious decision to slow down growth in order to foster the agency’s culture. “The beginning of this year was about solidifying our base of business before growing accounts,” she says. “Now, we’re willing to take on a new partner [again].”

—Marc Iskowitz



ICC Lowe Trio work for J&J’s Acuvue (above left) and its app for J&J’s oral-care products (above)