



# McK Healthcare

Searching for where the value is brings solid growth to Boston firm

## AT THE HELM

Melissa, Wojcik, VP, director of operations and administration; Rich Angelini, global creative director; Michael McLinden, partner, chief strategy officer

## PERFORMANCE

Revenue up about 14% to \$6.4 million in 2012

## HIGHLIGHTS

New business from Healthentic, Kencord Biotherapeutics and Color Con

Staff increased from 19 to 26

## CHALLENGES

Differentiating the firm from its competitors

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

**“We’re playing in the niches where value is being created”**

—Michael McLinden



**M**ichael McLinden, partner and chief strategy officer at Boston-based McK Healthcare, says the agency’s strategic and scientific focus has helped it grow amid the ongoing shifts around where value is being created in healthcare.

“In the 1980s and 1990s, the bulk of value was being created with new chemical entities and exciting new therapeutic products,” McLinden explains. “Value is increasingly being created in wellness programs, preventative care, cross-disciplinary care and supportive care in areas such as oncology. I think cross-disciplinary care will become increasingly important. By 2020, for diseases like MS and Parkinson’s, we might be talking as much about dance therapy, occupation therapy, and nutrition as about more traditional aspects of therapy.”

Three new accounts helped drive 2012 revenue up about 14% to \$6.4 million. The new wins reflect some of the changing industry dynamics to which McLinden refers. New client Healthentic focuses on wellness measurement and engineering, helping insurance companies and employers understand where health risks lie in their population, set behavior change goals and measure effectiveness. The company awarded McK

product positioning and messaging strategy work for its Online Whole Health Platform.

The agency also won premarket work on Kencord Biotherapeutics’ dermatology product portfolio and patient-facing promotional work for ColorCon’s OpaDry (film coating for pills) in China and India. McLinden says establishing brand value and differentiation for OpaDry was critical for ColorCon, though it was challenging given category maturity and emerging generic options.

“We’re playing in the niches where value is being created and where differences are being made in how healthcare is consumed,” McLinden notes. “It plays to our strategically and scientifically oriented skill set, and it’s just cool because it’s where changes are happening.”

Investment in digital and customer relationship management talent continued, and staff size increased from 19 to 26. Director of marketing Ian Gilbert was promoted to VP. Brand director Kathryn Hartz was promoted to VP, director of business development.

Last year was very busy, as the agency worked on launching UCB’s Parkinson’s disease treatment Neupro in the US and rebranding it in key European markets.

“There was a major rebrand of Neupro in Europe, and we were starting from scratch on it in the US—the catch was aligning those,” McLinden says.

Upsher-Smith Laboratories’ Divigel (estrogen replacement therapy) was also rebranded last year. McLinden says category differentiation was created by focusing on Divigel’s ability to help women feel beautiful and good about themselves.



McK work included pieces for Neupro (above left) and the website for Divigel (above)

The agency has been pitching, and McLinden hopes revenue will be up again this time next year. “Depth, vision and focus’ is our slogan,” he says. “We have to make sure we’re living that and incorporating that in everything we do. We can’t be a small version of our big competitors. We have to have a clear value proposition, and I feel like we do that. Our core team, process and commitment to service all differentiate us but it’s something we can never stop working at.” —Tanya Lewis