



**AT THE HELM**

Roger Haskins, associate partner, creative director, art; Nina Manasan Greenberg, managing partner, creative director; Andrew Gottfried, managing partner, director of client services

**PERFORMANCE**

Double-digit revenue growth in 2013

**HIGHLIGHTS**

Opened Entrée Health Princeton

Leveraged payer expertise into strong business

**CHALLENGES**

A client base that is under a lot of "pricing pressure"

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 183

# Entrée Health

Following up a smooth transition with a year of strong performance



**E**xecutive moves between leadership teams at agencies that are also corporate siblings often come with juicy backstories, at times involving tension in the hierarchy being left behind. But that's not the case in the set of circumstances that resulted in former Entrée Health managing partner Chuck Wagner's departure to CDM Group sister firm CDM Princeton. An opportunity arose, and Wagner accepted it.

Entrée prepared for the transition well in advance, installing director of client services Andrew Gottfried as a managing partner. How smooth was the transition? Both parties speak warmly of the other. As of the last week of May—more than a year after his departure—Wagner was still featured on the Entrée web site.

"The reality of it is that we've always had leadership that works well together," says managing partner, creative director Nina Manasan Greenberg. "To be honest, I don't think anyone besides the two of us [Greenberg and Gottfried] and Chuck felt the transition."

Beyond the smooth succession, the year was a busy one at Entrée. In May 2013, Greenberg had spoken hopefully about opening a new agency—not a sibling firm, but a separate one that would, in Gottfried's words, "be a graceful competitor" with Entrée and the other CDM Group shops. Entrée formally realized that goal on January 1, when Entrée Health Princeton

became a fully functioning, independent business unit.

The original Entrée stoked the new firm with what amounted to a head start: it handed over clients and about a quarter of its staff (currently, there are around 25 staffers in Princeton and 80 in New York). Given that both companies share a specialty—access and reimbursement marketing—one would think there's huge potential for conflict. But Greenberg says such concerns are overblown.

"There were people who were ready to take on more responsibility, so that's the new leadership," she explains. "And it's not like we sent people down there without plans; we sent them with accounts they'd been working on for some time. From an emotional standpoint, it was tough. But from a planning standpoint, we were ready for it. We're kind of geeks about planning."

Entrée's business remained strong throughout the transitions, owing in no small part to its payer expertise. "Virtually every client worries about it," Greenberg says. So far, 2014 has proven a tougher year, owing to a client base that Gottfried says is "under a tremendous amount of pricing pressures." The company nonetheless expects to end 2014 on the right side of the ledger, albeit a bit short of the double-digit growth it enjoyed in 2013 and most of the years that preceded it.

For the rest of the year and beyond, Entrée expects to split its attention between its own halls and the world beyond the United States. In mid-May, Green-



Digital work for Novo Nordisk (left) and an awareness piece promoting vaccination (above)

**"We're kind of geeks about planning"**

—Nina Manasan Greenberg

berg and Gottfried met with a host of CDM agency leaders in Paris, at what more or less amounted to a global-diversification summit for Entrée. As for the work to be done at home, the partners expect to devote consistent energy to preserving the company culture.

"One of the things we've had difficulty with in the past and are starting to get right is that, when you're in growth mode, maybe you take your eye off the culture a little," Greenberg says. "When we were growing last year, we paid close attention to that. Right now, there's big energy and laughter in the halls." —Larry Dobrow