



AT THE HELM

Andrea Bielecki,
president

PERFORMANCE

Agency reported upwards of 50% growth last year

HIGHLIGHTS

Worked closely with Novartis, Alcon and Medtronic

Moved into new offices that more than doubled its space

Expanded its work in the medical-device field, especially in digital

CHALLENGES

Finding staff that have a science background as well as tech skills

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

“To change the game, we have to focus on innovative projects”

—Andrea Bielecki

INVIVO Communications

A hi-tech focus adds devices work to Toronto shop’s roster



If a client asks you to be their AOR, it’s widely considered to be a significant achievement. But for some firms, breadth of work, and being able to “do it all,” isn’t always in their best interest.

“We’ve always been a highly specialized digital agency,” says agency president Andrea Bielecki. “I have a team of PhD’s, engineers and others with their master’s degree. I know that if I brought them basic HTML emails and banner ads, I’d probably lose them. I need to keep them stimulated.”

To foster a challenging environment, the agency “decided to keep our roots in that specialization,” she explains, “and focus on what we excel at: content transformation, new technology and innovations, and not go the agency-of-record route.

“We didn’t want to get bogged down in the minutiae of rudimentary projects,” she adds. “We wanted to keep our talent inspired to push the envelope—that’s what we’re known for in this industry.”

When *MM&M* checked in with INVIVO last year, the company reported upwards of 50% growth and was making the shift from entrepreneurship to being a budding midsize organization.

“Last year we grew 60%, so this year we didn’t reach for the sky and project tremendous growth,” Bielecki points out, “we wanted to put in new processes and procedures to ensure that we could get all of our projects done efficiently and effectively and still maintain their high quality.”

This past month the agency moved into a new space in downtown Toronto’s Liberty Village. Its new offices will offer double the space and help to accommodate that substantial growth.

INVIVO’s headcount hasn’t changed overall, but the composition of its staff has shifted from accounting teams to “more technology-focused individuals,” like developers.

Bielecki says the medical-device sector has shown a lot of appreciation for that challenging digital work. “We’ve grown in medical devices, that’s for sure. The iPad is a great medium to demonstrate the capabilities of a medical device—you can zoom in, take apart, and perform a virtual surgery with these tools. It’s no longer just animating and adding interactive because it’s cool, but doing it where it really adds value, and helping the physician get to that ‘okay, I get it’ moment.”

While INVIVO won’t disclose the brands it works on, the agency has continued to work closely with Novartis for iPad selling solution work, as well as with two medical device manufacturers, Alcon and Medtronic.

On the horizon, Bielecki hopes to add to the agency’s growing brain trust as well as try and redefine what constitutes “digital” in the healthcare industry.



INVIVO’s scientific skill comes into play in pieces targeting tumors (left) and cardiology (above)

“It’s never easy [adding new talent]; you need to have a background in science but also be interested in areas like predictive analytics, artificial intelligence, sensors...It’s usually someone who’s been in school for a bit. But they also need to be more agile than those [in academia], and be able to work with tight deadlines.

“Our mission is to change the way that people learn about medicine and manage their health. If we’re going to change the game we have to focus on innovative projects—we can’t be the agency that says, ‘Well, we can do everything, all things digital.’ We’ve got a leg up in this space, we need to continue to move in that direction.” —Kevin McCaffrey