



AT THE HELM

Cofounders Rich Fair, Jackie Herr, Tim Riley and Fabio Gratton

PERFORMANCE

2006 revenues up 36% vs. 2005 (to \$15 million)

Staff increased to 70

HIGHLIGHTS

Won 10 assignments (Atripla, Kogenate FS, Vigabatrin, Satraplatin, Zelapar, Cialis, Xigris, Arxxant and ovarian cancer products) and resigned three

Launched Incendia Health Studios

CHALLENGES

Dealing with increased DTC scrutiny

Finding diverse talent

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 143

Ignite Health

Innovative shop performs even more impressively on a bigger stage



Ignite Health's revenue soared 36% last year (from \$11 million to \$15 million), and staff increased from 65 to 70. "It was a year of transformation for the agency and the industry," says Fabio Gratton, cofounder and chief innovation officer.

He explains that increased DTC scrutiny has created a "dramatic shift" in target audience communication. "It's a consumer-centric world and the industry needs to participate in dialogue," he says. "People are just struggling with how to do that. Being in the interactive space, it's easier to narrow cast to a very targeted audience. For us to leverage those opportunities is tremendous. The internet allows for a more comprehensive dialogue—more information, video, fair balance. It's becoming a vehicle to provide more complete stories to audiences. And, the needle is moving in terms of disease education. It's not just product promotion, but communicating a comprehensive well-being story. It's putting therapies in a context."

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—Fabio Gratton

InVentiv Health acquired the agency in March 2007, thus broadening reach and capability. "We wanted to apply our model to a wider swath of clients," Gratton says. "InVentiv is entrepreneurial and believes in innovation and in letting you maintain your culture while expanding horizons. We're seeing a new world of opportunity and people that we didn't have access to before. Global opportunities are abundant. It's like being a kid in a candy store, to be honest."

Ignite won more than 10 assignments last year, and re-signed three. Wins included Atripla (HIV) from Gilead Sciences/Bristol-Myers Squibb; Bayer's Kogenate FS (hemophilia); epilepsy treatment Vigabatrin from Ovation Pharma; GPC Biotech's Satraplatin (prostate cancer); Valeant's Zelapar (Parkinson's disease); and ovarian cancer products from Telik. Lilly awarded Ignite Cialis, Xigris and Arxxant.

"If we can get clients thinking about their problem and not about the tactic, it allows the agency [to] address the issue from a variety of viewpoints," Gratton says. "It's a trend we'll see more and more, especially as people become more cost conscious and consolidate. The agency of the future can't just be one thing and not have a connection to more capabilities."

Ignite seeks talent with varied skills and perspectives. A hand animator was brought in from Russia. Film school graduates are nice candidates as they have technology and storytelling skills. "Diversity brings innovation," Gratton says. "It allows us to experiment with different ways of communicating."

Last year Ignite launched Incendia Health Studios, a separate company that focuses on disease states rather than products. "Its purpose is to create communities around disease states," Gratton says. "Consumers want more dialogue and transparency. The industry isn't stupid. They see it, but they have handcuffs. Incendia meets demand for two-way dialogue. Pharma companies have opportunity to advertise or sponsor without interfering or having content responsibility."

—Tanya Lewis



Above: Web site for Cephalon's Trisenox drug
Top left: Interactive play for Lasik eye surgery