



AT THE HELM

Lorraine Pastore,
president

HIGHLIGHTS

Added med ed to Roche
Fuzeon assignment

Won market
development business
on Schering-Plough's
vicriviroc and
GlaxoSmithKline's
ofatumumab, as well as
new work from Merck

CHALLENGES

Failure of a Boehringer
Ingelheim drug on which
the firm worked and
Sanofi-Aventis' decision
to halt promotion of
Ketek, for which the
agency did advertising

Recruiting and
regulatory uncertainty

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

“We pride ourselves on understanding that specialist customer better than those who dabble in the space”

—Lorraine Pastore

LifeBrands

Publicis' specialist shop overcomes
Ketek setback with spate of wins



LifeBrands, the specialist-focused arm of Publicis Healthcare Communications Group, picked up several modest pieces of new business and a new managing director in the past year.

John Timmins joins LifeBrands from Euro RSCG Life Oncologix, the HAVAS network's cancer specialty unit, where he was managing director. He replaces Linda Bennett, who was promoted to serve as regional coordinator on all accounts with Sanofi-Aventis, Publicis' biggest client. Founder (and startup junkie) Lorraine Pastore returned as president of the four-year-old firm after a stint at PHCG sibling Brand Pharm (the reincarnation of the Nelson agency's ad arm) to mind the store in the meantime. Former Rocephin marketer Brett Lowell remains creative director and biologist James Street, PhD, scientific director.

LifeBrands competes with Interpublic's Integrated and Omnicom's Harrison & Star in the specialist-focused advertising and promotion space. “We handle brands aimed at —ologists, —iatrists and surgeons,” says Pastore, noting that the company's Midtown office is dominated by a man-sized representation of its test tube icon—just so there's no mistaking their focus. “We don't do anything in the way of primary care and we pride

ourselves on understanding that [specialist] customer better than those who dabble in the space.” More than two-thirds of the firm's business comes from physician-directed advertising and promotion, with the remainder taken up by medical education projects.

More than 60% of the firm's business is in oncology treatments, including Sanofi's Taxotere, Novartis Oncology's developmental products and Glaxo-SmithKline's Tykerb, ofatumumab and eltrombopag. The company is also amassing a substantial virology portfolio, including Roche's Fuzeon and Schering-Plough's vicriviroc, both for HIV/AIDS. Last year, LifeBrands launched Schering-Plough's Noxafil, for opportunistic infections related to AIDS, along with Taxotere for gastric and head and neck cancers. Sanofi is the company's top client, followed by Merck and Schering-Plough.

Over the past year, the shop has landed business from Roche, adding the education assignment on Fuzeon to its global ad/promotion assignment on the brand, as well as market development tasks for Schering-Plough's microvira and GSK's ofatumumab and new work from Merck. Setbacks included Sanofi's decision to halt promotion of its controversial Ketek antibiotic, for which LifeBrands had the advertising assignment, and the failure of a Boehringer Ingelheim drug on which the firm worked in clinical trials.

“We've put together a group that really wants to be in specialist brands and puts an incredible amount of passion behind what we do,” says Pastore, noting that the company has just hired its third PhD and has an opening



Above: Journal ad for Sanofi Aventis' Taxotere
Top left: From an ad for Sanofi Aventis' Hyalgan

for a fourth. LifeBrands' expert staff helps goose claims development, she says. “They understand the molecule so well, they know all the ins and outs, and they can make claims from a scientific perspective.”

But recruiting talent remains a major headache—along with the ever-changing regulatory landscape. “The constraints are getting tighter and together, and from a regulatory perspective, the industry changes dramatically every year, so it's hard to know what's next,” she says. —Matthew Arnold