



AT THE HELM

John Puglisi, president and managing partner

PERFORMANCE

Doubled revenue in 2008

HIGHLIGHTS

100% revenue growth in its interactive division

Secured some important wins, including business with Abbott, Athena Diagnostics and Gloucester Pharmaceuticals

Key new hires: Bob Paglia and Joe Laborsky, PharmD

Moved into new 28,000-square-foot office space

CHALLENGE

Focusing more on e-detailing, not direct selling

For contact details, service offerings and client roster, see Agency A-to-Z, beginning on page 175

Beacon Healthcare Communications

Self-proclaimed “best kept secret” finds growth in interactive division



The way John Puglisi sees it, being the best kept secret in the industry may not be such a bad thing. Puglisi, the president and managing partner of Beacon Healthcare Communications, told *MM&M* that his agency is doing quite well. In fact, they doubled their revenue in 2008 and have experienced double-digit growth since 2001.

How does Puglisi explain his company’s success in a down economy? “I think the way we are structured, we offer a very different model,” he says. “And I think because the way the economy is going and the way the pharma companies are reducing its size and consolidating, we’ve developed a model that’s based on different platforms and different offerings.”

What does Puglisi mean by that? “We have different offerings, we bring in managed care with our professional, and we bring in DTC and consumer with our professional and managed care,” he notes.

Puglisi says that along with Tim Millas, VP/creative director and managing partner, Beacon doesn’t just pitch the business and then switch-out to younger kids.

“Whoever pitches the business, works the business. It’s a very different model and it really can’t be managed by the bigger companies in terms of the holding companies because it’s a very expensive proposition.”

The company had some important wins in 2008. In particular, significant business with Abbott as well as with Athena Diagnostics. Beacon won a piece of oncology business with Gloucester Pharmaceuticals that spans a variety of therapeutic categories. Millas says that recent account wins span managed markets, professional, high science, interactive and oncology.

Millas said that the company is particularly proud of its interactive division, started in 2007, and has achieved 100% revenue growth in 2008. “It’s not dumping print content onto the web; what we really do is bring together strategic expertise, a creative expertise that’s really specific to the web as well as the web design aspect and we have that strong structural underpinning in terms of the data management through the web and through interactive. We’ve done some really good work with Allergan on the web and Astellas.”

Beacon, which moved into a new 28,000-square-foot office space, currently has 82 employees and recently added Bob Paglia, account manager; Joe Laborsky, PharmD, managing director; Bruce Jenkins in the interactive area; and Dave Irvin creative arena.



Above: A DTC campaign for Allergan’s Restasis;
Left: Part of a program ad for Athena Diagnostics

Going forward Puglisi says that he’d like to keep open the opportunity to expand his offerings. He added that it’s important to try and understand the consumer better. “Having a better dialogue with them, I think that’s going to play a lot more.” He also foresees less reliance on direct selling and more on e-detailing.

On what factors have accounted for the success of this relatively unknown, but growing agency, Millas comments: “One of the things that we did from the get-go is we came up with a different agency model, redefined what value means for an agency and what talent means within the agency.”

He said that Beacon tried to establish a model that offers a breadth of services—professional, managed markets, DTC, CRM, interactive, high science—but also offer them in a way that’s well integrated and very nimble and efficient. —Anthony Vecchione

“It’s not dumping print content onto the web; we bring together strategic and creative expertise”

—John Puglisi