

PUBLICIS HEALTH MEDIA

As far as origin stories go, the one chronicling Publicis Health Media's first HealthFront event is relatively straightforward. PHM president Andrea Palmer had left the 2018 Upfronts and NewFronts feeling that both events had limited relevance for health marketers. Upon returning to the office, she proposed that the agency stage something similar, but specific to health media. Less than a year later, PHM packed more than 400 clients (Novartis, GlaxoSmithKline) and media partners (Meredith, iHeart Media, Verywell) into the Classic Car Club Manhattan for two days' worth of presentations and panel discussions.

"It became such a big part of our identity right away. Clients had such a positive response," Palmer recalls.

The HealthFront was a PHM high point in a year that had several of them. The agency expanded its PHMkr program to include partnerships with Condé Nast, Viacom and Vice, among others. It debuted Validated By PHM, a platform created to ensure that health/wellness brand content is placed in brand-safe environments, and HLTHQ, designed with Nativo to measure the impact of content programs.

Taken collectively, these events and platforms cemented PHM's reputation as one of the most innovation-minded media firms, in health and otherwise. "That's the essence of our agency," Palmer says. "We've seen our clients get excited about having things designed specifically for them. They feel they can finally take advantage of the types of innovations they see in other industries."

Many of these programs were beta-tested during 2019; Palmer says they're ready to scale in 2020 and beyond. "I think of our people as disruptors. We have that fail-forward-and-fail-fast mentality, but we can also pivot quickly."

PHM also bolstered its competitive intelligence function, which Palmer says had been a "pain point" for some time. "In healthcare, it's not just about how much you spend," she



AT THE HELM

Andrea Palmer,
president

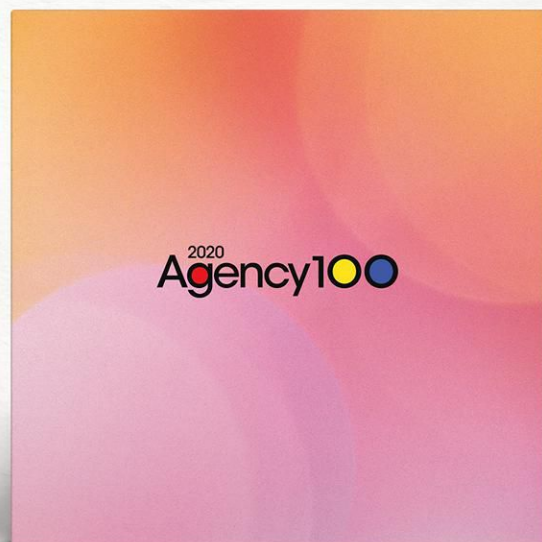
PERFORMANCE

Revenue grew 14% to
\$108 million in 2019

THE BEST MARKETING WE SAW IN 2019...

The Big See, created by Digitas Health for the Skin Cancer Foundation. It inspires people to take health and wellness into their own hands at the right moment — and does so with the kind of social media and experiential elements that resonate. The concept was borne out of the experience of my friend and colleague, Sue Manber, who is a skin cancer survivor. Her journey led to the campaign's humanity and power. — Andrea Palmer

ALBUM ART



explains. "It's about strategy in relation to the competition." The resulting tool incorporates business intelligence and other elements that give clients a more detailed picture of their standing.

Revenue grew in turn, from \$95 million in 2018 to \$108 million in 2019. The agency added 130 people during the year, finishing with 498 full-timers spread among its offices in Philadelphia, New York and Chicago.

Hires included managing director Gia Mauriello (who joined from CMI/Compas) and executive client leads Dori Cappola (Klick Health), Jan Weinstein (Wavemaker), Erin Harvey (PHD Media) and David Klein (m/SIX). PHM also brought in Patty Ryan to helm a social media team that started the year with six people and ended it with 50. "It was somewhat of a support function, but now we're leaders in social in health media," Palmer says.

While the coronavirus pandemic prompted PHM to cancel a planned second year for the HealthFront, Palmer promises that it will return in 2021. In its absence, PHM is looking to virtualize some of the proposed content for airing over the next several months.

"It was hard to let go of, to be honest," Palmer says. "But the right thing to do is give everybody an opportunity to recalibrate." — LD

WHAT SETS YOU APART?

PHM strives to not just lead the market, but to move it forward with innovative media that helps create better outcomes for clients and patients.

