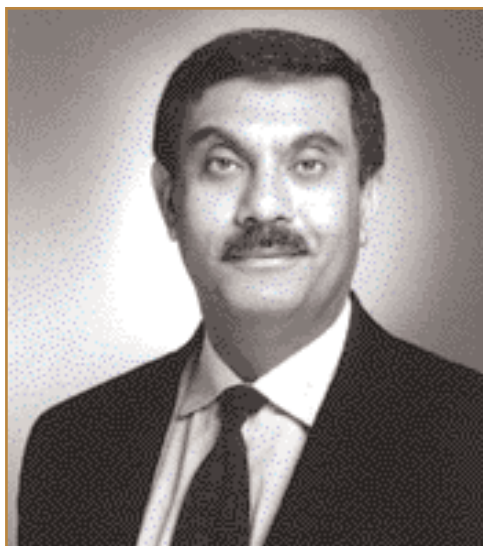


Exploiting the Inevitable

EURO RSCG Tackles Globalization

In January 2000, Remtulla + Associates became part of EURO RSCG Healthcare Worldwide. Although not a household name in Canada, EURO RSCG is the third largest health-care network in the world. We thought it would be interesting to ask Mehbs Remtulla, Chairman and Chief executive officer of EURO RSCG Canada, how it was going one year later.



Mehbs Remtulla
Chairman & CEO, EURO RSCG
Canada

What led to the merger with EURO RSCG and what has this meant for Remtulla EURO RSCG?

Remtulla: The short answers are “globalization” and “we’ve just had our best year ever.” We moved into spacious new premises, and we have started to run out of space already!

It goes deeper than this, of course.

Yes, can you comment on what globalization means in Canada?

Remtulla: I have mixed feelings about it. I spent nearly 10 years on the client side of this business, and I didn’t jump out of bed every morning so that I could rush down to the office and fine-tune a global campaign that didn’t really fit with my needs in Canada. And if there are any brand managers reading this, I know they feel the same way.

On the other hand, one of my favorite quotes is Charles de Gaulle’s “Exploit the inevitable.”

So, we saw joining EURO RSCG as the best way to get access to global resources while staying totally focused on what’s best for Canada. That’s because EURO RSCG (unlike the other agency networks) is very hands-off.

What sets EURO RSCG apart from other pharmaceutical/medical advertising agencies?

Remtulla: There’s a couple of ways of answering that. We recently did a study of all the promises

*The Party's Over
ad.*

Career Focus

Mehbs Remtulla's career path to his current position as Chairman & CEO of EURO RSCG.

Mehbs Remtulla was born in East Africa to an entrepreneurial family. He was educated in England and was, in his own words, a late bloomer. He loved business, and he also loved communication, but that did not immediately suggest a career. Partly to fulfill family tradition, he went into the medical field, and graduated as a pharmacist. Wanderlust (and a job!) took him to Alberta, where he happily typed labels and counted pills until the novelty wore off. He then got a job with Allergan, and history started to unfold. Over the next nine years, he moved up through the ranks at Allergan, with senior positions in sales, marketing, and corporate planning. Along the way, he became fascinated with the communication part of building businesses, and his entrepreneurial gene kicked in. He opened Remtulla + Associates in 1987, with Allergan as his first client!

The company prospered over the next 13 years, attracting many blue-chip clients which it retains to this day. In January 2000, Remtulla + Associates merged with the EURO RSCG Worldwide and Mehbs was appointed Chairman & CEO of Euro RSCG Healthcare (Canada) which comprises the two advertising agencies and will soon include PR, CHE and Interactive.

made by agencies, and, no surprises here, all agencies, including ours, believe in:

- Incisive strategies;
- Breakthrough creative;
- Going beyond “ads and detail aids” to total communication;
- Senior representation;
- Great people;
- Delivering on time and on budget; and
- Being partners, not suppliers.

In other words, as David Sharpe, our Creative Director puts it: “Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.”

The other answer goes a bit deeper. It's the way we launch and build brands. We use a lot of crossover learning from the consumer world. This started in 1991 with our symposium “Branding in Pharmaceuticals.” And with the addition of EURO RSCG our knowledge is even greater.

Can you give us an example of that difference.

Remtulla: The most dramatic would be Boehringer Ingelheim's Mobicox®, which we've just helped launch. As you know, Celebrex® and Vioxx® are significant brands. As Cox-2 inhibitors, they have all the benefits of NSAIDs with fewer side effects. Mobicox is another Cox-2. It's considerably less expensive than Celebrex and Vioxx, but it's third in.

In our new business pitch, we pointed out consumer examples that had similar positioning

EURO RSCG

issues. We used that to create what we call brand attitude—and I'd like to acknowledge that our client came up with the exact words. They have to stay confidential, of course. Suffice to say that they helped us come up with the pre-launch ad that set the scene for everything that followed: "The Party's Over."

Are there other changes in how pharmaceutical companies are reaching their audiences?

Remtulla: The biggest area, of course, is e-business. I just chaired the first Canadian e-pharma Summit and the theme there was how to ride this wave without wiping out. This includes relationship marketing in the electronic age. Relationship marketing is a bit of a buzzword these days, but we should remember that the pharma industry invented relationship marketing. That's what the reps do, and it will still be the key way to get the message out. But now, with an increasing number of "no see" physicians, we have to find new ways to build that relationship. Permission marketing—properly handled—will be key, and EURO RSCG is on the leading edge of this.

Another area where we would like to see more change, is in what we call "Winning the launch before the launch." Let me give you an example. Think about an election campaign. How important is it to get the right message

Low Blow Part 1

Because of the value advantage, we did an ad aimed at benefits consultants. You can see that it's entirely consistent with "The Party's Over" but the message is calibrated to what that audience is really interested in.

Low Blow Part 2

Multi-channel
branding star visual

We call our approach Multi-Channel Branding. We find the core message, and turn it into a brand story, calibrated to work for all the different audiences, while staying true to the brand.

out? Crucial, of course. How early do they bring in the marketing and communication experts? Right from day one.

In pharma, however, there's a tendency to hand off to marketing relatively late in the process, and to the agencies even later. But by then, all kinds of "off strategy" information can leak out. Far better, in our view, to manage this right from the start. When you build a brand, you have to manage every point of contact your audience has with the brand, and this starts well before launch.

Is this activity aimed at all the audiences?

Remtulla: Yes—though not with a shotgun. And this is one of the big challenges in building a brand. How can you keep all the messages consistent, when the audiences are so diverse—from KOLs (key opinion leaders) to LOLs (little old ladies)? It's all too easy for the message to go off in all directions, and get lost in the clutter.

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brand story, calibrated to work for all the different audiences, while staying true to the brand. Mobicox is, again, a good example. Because of the value advantage, we did an ad aimed at benefits consultants. You can see that it's entirely consistent with "The Party's Over" but the message is calibrated to what that audience is really interested in.

You mentioned LOLs. That brings up the question of direct-to-consumer (DTC) advertising. Where do you stand on that?

Remtulla: It's pretty clear that fully branded DTC (as in the United States) has a good track record—and EURO RSCG has a lot of success stories. In Canada, our Montreal operation handled DTC for the Viagra launch, so there's no question that DTC is an important tool here, too. That said, I think clients are uneasy, and rightly so, when an agency jumps too quickly onto the DTC bandwagon. DTC is right for some brands, but not others. We look at it the same way we look at any brand-building activity. Develop the right strategy, come up with the best way to break through, decide if this will do the job and crunch the numbers to make sure the effort will pay out. We have an algorithm for this, based on our combined American and Canadian experience.

On this topic, by the way, I think that PR tends to be overlooked. One reason, quite frankly, is that PR is often in a silo. We think it

EURO RSCG

should be a fully integrated part of multi-channel branding, and are structuring ourselves that way.

How does your agency maintain a successful and productive relationship with your clients?

Remtulla: Most of our top managers in Toronto and Montreal have been clients, and we all saw agencies do things that made us shake our heads. So when we set up Remtulla + Associates we had a simple credo: *Let's create the agency we would hire.* As clients, we wanted an agency that was as passionate about building the client's business as we were—someone who took ownership, someone who was always coming up with ideas that would work and someone who understood steak and sizzle.

That's why we start major assignments with what we call a "Best Brains Early session." This is a process that "interrogates the brand until it confesses its strength." It often involves the best brains from the client and the agency side and is done very early in the assignment of a brand.

What does the future hold for EURO RSCG?

Remtulla: The future is very bright. We've always seen health care as a specialist area, but we feel that there is so much to learn from the broader world of business. Did you know that EURO

Client List	
Remtulla EURO RSCG (Toronto)	Euro RSCG Healthcare (Montreal)
Abbott Laboratories	Abbott Laboratories
Bayer Biologics (Canada) Inc.	Crystaal
Bayer Biologics (Global Marketing)	Lundbeck
Boehringer Ingelheim	Novartis
Centre for Addiction & Mental Health	Pfizer
Crystaal	Schering
Eli Lilly Canada Inc	Servier
Eli Lilly (Global Marketing)	Stiefel
Janssen-Ortho Inc.	
Knoll Pharma Inc	
Sanofi-Synthelabo	

RSCG Worldwide is the agency that came up with "Intel® Inside" and helped Intel create one of the most powerful brands in the world? Did you know that we also work for DELL® and Microsoft®? Think about all the e-business learning that can be transferred to health care—we are just cracking the surface.

The other area is silos. Health care is still driven by silos, but we are convinced that those silos have to come down. As I said before, brands are built by "every point of contact" and that means that you need all the disciplines at the table: advertising, PR, e-business, CME and so on.

Using the resources of EURO RSCG, we are putting together the integrated model that turns this into a reality.

Do you have any other comments?

Remtulla: Well, it's a poor rep who doesn't ask for the order. If anyone would like to know more, we'd love to hear from them. They should contact Mark Spurr, Managing Director in Toronto, at mspurr@remtullaeurorscg.com or (416) 925-9005, or Jonathan Wasserman, Managing Director in Montreal. He can be reached at jwasserman@eurorscgmtl.com