

DWA HEALTHCARE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

Raising the Bar in Healthcare Education



Deborah Wood was freelancing as a meeting planner for a variety of industries in 1994 when she decided to incorporate as Deborah Wood & Associates. Today, she admits that the name of the company at the time of its founding was a slight exaggeration.

“I have to confess—I tripled the size of the company when I hired two people. There were no ‘Associates’ until two years in,” Deborah says, laughing. “At the beginning, it was a one-person operation. I transformed a bedroom in my home into office space when I launched the company. Two years later, I was given the wonderful opportunity to subcontract for a major pharmaceutical company, which introduced me to the healthcare industry. And I never looked back.”

The impact on the healthcare industry that Deborah’s business has made is as remarkable as its transformation from that spare bedroom office into an award-winning group of companies with more than 170 employees. What began as a highly effective medical meeting planning company has evolved into DWA Healthcare Communications Group (DWA), a Certified Women’s Business Enterprise that has been recognized as one of Indiana’s “Top Companies to Watch” and has been on the *Indianapolis Star’s* List of Top Workplaces for two years running. Now with clients around the world, DWA and its affiliates are a global corporation that excels in continually raising the bar as a trusted, caring, and effective

leader in the development and dissemination of superior medical and health communication and education across the healthcare spectrum.

The DWA logo of four squares represents the four entities of the company that are unified in their mission of providing high-impact education:

- ▶ DWA Healthcare Communications Group
- ▶ Avant Healthcare Marketing
- ▶ CME Enterprise
- ▶ The healthcare community

Avant Healthcare Marketing (Avant) strategizes with the world’s leading pharmaceutical, medical device, and biotechnology companies to cultivate awareness on disease state topics and educate healthcare professionals on scientific and medical subject matter. With more than a decade of successful outcomes and a track record of launching 12 multi-million and billion dollar pharmaceutical brands, Avant is a recognized leader in peer-to-peer strategies and medical education. Avant leverages the combined expertise of in-house brand and medical professionals to build networks of business and scientific advisors, provide strategic solutions throughout the product

life cycle, and drive market share. Avant has received numerous industry honors and most recently was awarded a supplier of the year award from a major pharmaceutical client, a distinction bestowed to select companies for consistently demonstrating improvement in quality, service, speed, total cost reduction, and value while working in a collaborative business model.

CME Enterprise is an Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education-accredited medical education company with extensive resources dedicated to planning, designing, executing, and evaluating continuing medical education (CME) activities and materials for healthcare professionals. Its team of medical professionals develops extensive needs and performance gap assessments, executes needs-based curricula, and impacts practitioner knowledge and patient outcomes. For its work in the continuing medical education arena, CME Enterprise has received numerous awards, including two 2010 National Association of Medical Education Companies Awards and the 2010 Alliance Award for Innovation in Continuing Professional Development for the CME Professional and/or Enterprise.



“The fourth square represents the healthcare community that, in every way, is a valued partner that brings out the best in our companies as we work to stay true to the goals of healthcare education: advancing and improving patient outcomes,” Deborah says. “The recurring use of the four squares signifies the consistency and harmony of our culture and community, and no matter where you go in the corporation, you will engage with our shared mission and values.”

A CULTURE OF CARING

Central to the core values of DWA is the belief that the company must invest in the local community and, in doing so, demonstrate that DWA is a company that cares. More than 75% of DWA staff donate time, presence, and resources to charitable organizations and events throughout the year, including the American Diabetes Association, the United Way, Back on My Feet, the Julian Center, School on Wheels, Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana, the Good Samaritan Network, Habitat for Humanity, Heroes Club, Ronald McDonald House, Second Helpings, and the Children’s TherAplay Foundation, among others. The company takes action and responsibility for supporting numerous charitable events and organizations in the local community and empowers its associates to lead these efforts in the belief that true leadership is measured by service to others.

To that end, DWA CARES (Community, Action, Responsibility, Empowerment, and Service) was established to unite all charitable outreach efforts of the company under one focused mission and team. The DWA CARES Leadership Team allows for development of individual employees who are leadership bound—not only in the corporation, but in the community. It provides leaders and emerging leaders with opportunities to take advantage of scholarships for special United Way leadership programs and trainings.

Carmel: ‘round about right

The establishment of DWA CARES is closely aligned with the company’s implementation of the DWA Green initiative, which strives to reduce the company’s environmental footprint. A number of green practices are now in place throughout the company’s headquarters, including reusing materials and supplies when possible, properly disposing of unwanted electronics and empty toner cartridges, and recycling aluminum cans and shredded paper.

A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE

The DWA commitment to excellence is founded upon a dedication to continuous improvement and learning. At the heart of their success is the company-wide utilization of proven methodologies—Lean Six Sigma, the Six Disciplines, and the principles of the Project Management Institute, among others—to ensure performance, client relationships, and results are tested, vetted, and optimized. Equally critical is a corporate culture grounded in a set of core values established early on by Deborah. Collectively known as the H4S—Honorable, Healthy, Hungry, Humble, and Smart—these values are promoted throughout the company as the foundation for all work as well as for interactions with clients and fellow employees.

Employees being their best and achieving their own personal goals is facilitated by numerous company initiatives, including the Live Well program, which provides tools and coaching to help employees improve their mind, body, and spirit. That reach for excellence is also evidenced by DWA U, the corporate university at DWA that offers employees continuing professional development programs that prepare them personally and intellectually for lifelong learning and affirms their commitment to personal growth and professional development.

“This company is a vibrant learning community and we promote lifelong learning among our



associates,” Deborah says. “The only way that DWA can be the best version of itself is for our associates to be the best version of themselves. I feel it is my responsibility as President and CEO of this company to provide multiple opportunities for employees to grow in their skills and knowledge and aspire to reach their goals.”

