

# LOOKING AHEAD TO A SECOND SUCCESSFUL DECADE

“MMS is a very special type of DR agency,” says Marianna Morello, president and CEO of leading DR print agency Manhattan Media Services Inc. (MMS), from her office overlooking New York’s Fifth Avenue. “We handle our client with tender-loving care. From the time we plan and place a test schedule until the full rollout campaign, we are there every step of the way.”

A sampling of Manhattan’s clients definitely agrees with her assessment of the agency, which celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in late April. In fact, those clients not only credit Morello for making the agency a success but also for being one of the bright lights in the DR world.

“Manhattan is very smart about placing print ads. It’s just something I had no expertise with,” says Hal Lederman, vice president of marketing for Aussie Nad’s U.S. Corp. in Palm Desert, Calif. “I understood TV well, but print was new to me. I trusted Marianna to do it well. She’s been honest and upstanding. That’s the thing that’s so attractive about her as a businesswoman — she oozes honesty, and she’s a real person.”

According to Morello, MMS is a full-service direct

response agency specializing in print media at substantial discounts. “We help our client develop a print strategy that can support DRTV, retail or online advertising,” she adds. “We assist in all facets of media planning — research and development, strategic media planning and analysis after the media buy is placed.”

Morello has been involved in advertising for nearly 30 years. Since creating Manhattan Media in 1995, she has put together a strong team that has built MMS into what it is today. But what can we expect from the company in the next 10 years?

## Building an Agency

Morello, who started in advertising as a part-time summer ad sales representative for the *National Enquirer* in 1976, jumped quickly to New York-based media buying/barter agency SLG Inc. “I resigned after 18 years when the company moved to Connecticut,” she says. “I founded MMS on April 25, 1995.”

It wasn’t long before MMS began having great success. “We worked with her at her previous agency,” says A.J. Khubani, founder, president and CEO of Fairfield,

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Celebrating 10 years in business, Manhattan Media Services is still running strong under the guidance of Marianna Morello.

Manhattan Media Services’ DR print expertise has boosted the fortunes of many campaigns, including those for Aussie Nad’s, HairUWear, IdeaVillage and Telebrands.

N.J.-based DR company TELEBrands. “The moment she wanted to start her own agency, we backed her 100 percent and moved all of our business to Manhattan immediately.”

Michael Kleinman, executive vice president of HairUWear, became a believer in MMS early on as well. “I first met Marianna when I was vice president of marketing for a division of Revlon,” he says. “With her assistance and guidance, I was able to venture out into my own mail order catalog business.”

Over the years, MMS’ print expertise has been a crucial part in the success of many famous DR products, including:

- Salton’s George Foreman Grill
- TELEBrands’ State Quarters Map, Magic Hangers, Natural Bra and Better Pasta Pot

**Staying on Top**

“We have been in business for 10 years because of a proven track record with our clients, and because we have niched ourselves as the No. 1 DRTV agency of choice,” says Morello. She credits her team — which includes Roger Choukroun, chief operations officer; Jackie Redger, controller; Celia de Dios, director of sales and marketing; Viraya Rodjam, account executive; Heidi Sanchez, bookkeeper; Jenny Valino, traffic coordinator; Marc Sibal, senior sales executive; Jaleel Maad, IT director; and Liza Pancho, administrative assistant — with the creativity and innovation to keep that track record growing.

That growth includes new client Jamster. “Jamba is Europe’s leading wireless content service provider, selling ringtones, pictures and games,” Morello says. “Acquired by Verisign in the United States, Jamba is now the leader in the U.S. market as well, and is recognized here as Jamster. We work closely with it to develop every aspect of its print campaign in coordination with its TV efforts.”

MMS’ print campaign for Jamster started in January and is supporting TV spots that are in heavy rotation on various cable networks. “In recent months, we have tested every publication reaching their target audience and received tremendous response,” Morello beams.

The excitement and vigor Morello brings to each new client is the key to MMS’ success, Khubani believes. “How do you beat 25 years experience in the business?” he asks. “She offers great advice. She’s seen it all. She knows the best prices. And she’s extremely energetic and enthusiastic. Some people lose that enthusiasm after 10-20 years in business, but not Marianna.”

Combining that enthusiasm with “support, knowledge and a sincere sense of partnership,” as Kleinman says, and a devotion to her staff bodes well for Morello and MMS looking forward. “Our agency is a boutique shop that really specializes in print media,” she says. “Our vast array of clients has created a very seasoned team.”

“During the next decade, I would like to build my agency into a major DR agency,” she adds. “I want to be up there with the big guys one day, yet continue to service my clients in our boutique-style fashion. I would also like to share my profits with my devoted staff.” ■



Meet the Manhattan Media Services team. Standing, left to right: Heidi Sanchez, bookkeeper; Jaleel Maad, IT director; Liza Pancho, administrative assistant; Jenny Valino, traffic coordinator; Roger Choukroun, COO; Jackie Redger, controller; Celia de Dios, director of sales and marketing; Viraya Rodjam, account executive. Seated: Marc Sibal, senior sales executive; Marianna Morello, president and CEO.

- Aussie Nad’s hair depilatory product
- Fitness Quest fitness products
- HairUWear’s Great Lengths, Raquel Welch Signature Wigs and Put-on Pieces
- IdeaVillage’s Bikini Touch and Finishing Touch

“The reason these campaigns were successful was because print supported the TV advertising,” Morello says. “The synergy between TV and print is what worked.”

Kleinman agrees. “Great Lengths was recently listed by VH-1 among the top 40 products in the world,” Kleinman says. “Obviously, the product and collateral marketing is great, but Manhattan Media enabled us to accelerate advertising and grow our business years ahead of schedule.”

Lederman adds that Morello knows where to take a specific product to find the most success. “It’s mainly a female product, so Manhattan buys most of the fashion books: *Cosmopolitan*, *CosmoGirl*, *Allure* — just about any one you can name,” he says. “Marianna helped us find our demo for the purpose of moving the product to retail.”



Congratulations to  
*Manhattan Media Services*  
on 10 years of success.



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