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## Ads' Aim: Put Recession in Rear-View Mirror

### RGP Wants More Than "Modest Growth"

■ BY MEDIHA DIMARTINO

Some compliments come with a challenge.

"We have been told that we are the best-kept secret in the professional services business," said **Tony Cherbak**, chief executive of Irvine-based Resources **Global Professionals**. "We don't want to be the best-kept secret. We want to kick it up a notch and see if we can reach a more diversified audience."



**Cherbak: RGP aims to "kick it up a notch"**

That's why RGP is putting some kick into its marketing with an advertising campaign that includes its first-ever TV spots to go with print and radio buys. It's a bid to create "top of mind" awareness of its brand among the executives likely to tap its roster of more than 2,000 high-level professionals who hire out on a project basis.

The firm won't disclose the cost of campaign.

It comes less than a month after Cherbak was promoted to chief executive of RGP, the operating unit of publicly traded **Resources Connection Inc.**

RGP accounted for \$571.8 million in revenue and \$41.1 million in earnings last year. It has more than 3,000 people on its payroll, and its consultants advise clients on risk management, internal audits, corporate advisory, strategic communications, restructuring, information management or legal and regulatory services.



**"Cost Pressures:" 30-second spot runs on Squawk Box, other CNBC shows**

The TV ads, created by Lighthouse Branding Inc. in Los Angeles, debuted earlier this month on a roster of CNBC's programs, including *Worldwide Exchange*, *Squawk Box*, *Mad Money* and the *Kudlow Report*.

The advertising comes as RGP looks to move firmly to a post-recession footing.

The downturn saw RGP reel off five consecutive quarters of declining revenue, a streak that ran through the first quarter of fiscal year 2010. The firm joined the slow recovery in mid-2010, and has seen a "modest growth rate" since then. Now RGP wants more—and it sees advertising as a way to set a new pace.

"There is a lot of uncertainty in the world," Cherbak said. "Major companies are not putting money back into their business; they are cutting costs. With the TV ads we hope to generate more brand awareness, which should lead to increase in revenue."

RGP's TV ads portray the company as an "efficient and cost-effective partner to today's resource-challenged businesses," Cherbak said.

One of the ads features a client who gets a binder full of generic recommendations from traditional consultants and is left alone to figure out how to put a solution into practice. The spot cuts to a happy ending—the client hires RGP consultants,

who get the job done.

The ads "focused on reinforcing our differentiators in the professional services space and building high-level brand awareness," said Mike Sitrick, chief executive of Sitrick Brincko Group of Los Angeles, an RGP-owned public relations agency.

RGP will continue advertising on business news channels over the next 12 months.

It also recently launched a new, three-letter domain name—*rgp.com*—which stands for an acronym widely used by its clients, employees and analysts.

"It was owned by a small business and had been for a number of years," Sitrick said. "We approached the business transparently and negotiated a win-win solution for them and for our business."

The RGP brand also is getting boosts from direct marketing along with social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

RGP was founded in 1996 as a division of Deloitte & Touche LLP. Current Executive Chairman Don Murray led a management buyout in 1999, and RGP went public in 2000.

It now competes with the Big Four accounting firms—Deloitte, Ernst & Young LLP, KPMG LLP and PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. The company has grown by opening new offices and increasing the volume of its services. It has 75 offices in 20 countries.

RGP does not disclose the identities of its clients, but according to Cherbak, it has served 86 of the Fortune 100 companies.

RGP's parent, Resources Connection, ranked No. 30 on the latest Business Journal list of the largest public companies based in Orange County.

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