

Westport Firm Expands After TV Success

By Richard Lee
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After building a following for its Sunday night television show on diabetes, Westport-based LifeMed Media, is expanding its offerings to include a consumer services program.

"It's like an AARP for diabetes. We're going to launch it this summer," said LifeMed founder Howard Steinberg and chief executive officer. "We are also creating educational resources for health-care professionals and a Web site for diabetes educators."

Steinberg, who has had type 1 diabetes since childhood, started LifeMed in 2004 after selling Source Marketing, a Westport firm. He launched dLife-For Your Diabetes Life!, an integrated media network targeting the estimated 21 million people living with diabetes, their caregivers and families.

In March 2005, LifeMed started producing its dLife television show that airs at 7 p.m. Sundays on CNBC. It has attracted more than a dozen advertisers, including Bayer, Colgate, Pfizer, Abbott Diabetes Care and Sanofi-Aventis.

"They have a pent-up need to reach this audience efficiently. This is so laser-targeted, it gives them a good solution," said Steinberg, who has 25 contracted employees at a television production office in New York City and 24 employees in Westport.

LifeMed's dLife Diabetes Minutes with Dr. Bob Arnot airs on terrestrial and XM Satellite radio, and the company sends an advertising-supported newsletter to 2.5 million households.

It offers companies an opportunity to advertise on the dLife radio spots and its Web site. It is on track to achieve \$75 million in revenue within five years.

Steinberg has developed an attractive vehicle for companies to market their diabetes-related products and services, said Kevin McEvoy, marketing professor at the University of Connecticut.

"It's target marketing. It's a very defined market. It's the kind of market manufacturers are looking for," McEvoy said.

LifeMed could be a model for organizations that focus on other diseases, said Terri Pedone, spokeswoman for insulin producer Sanofi-Aventis.

"We advertise in diabetes journals, and this is the next evolution," she said. "We've been working with them since last year."