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Visionary Women Leading Creative Team at [Risdall Marketing Group](http://RisdallMarketingGroup.com)
Lara Balai and Tina Karelson named presidents of creative; Erik Kvålseth joins team

NEW BRIGHTON, MINN. (Jan. 21, 2010) – As part of its 2010 plan, [Risdall Marketing Group](http://RisdallMarketingGroup.com) (RMG) has reorganized its creative team to meet the needs of today’s businesses. Lara Balai and Tina Karelson have been named presidents of creative, and Erik Kvålseth has joined the agency as creative director/copywriter.

“These changes represent the tradigital future of agency creative,” said John Risdall, vice chairman and CEO of RMG. “As marketplace expectations for messaging and delivery of those messages continue to change to be more interactive and two-way, we are putting in place a leadership team more reflective of what clients want.”

Balai and Karelson will co-manage the division, with Balai guiding the visual work and Karelson directing the writing work of the agency.



Lara Balai, Co-president of Creative

Since joining RMG in 2006, Balai has worked with many of the agency’s health care accounts, including: Hospira, OptumHealth, Corespine, VTI, Devicix, AGA Medical and more. Her positioning and messaging to unify Hospira’s IV infusion pumps, patient safety software, and implementation services under a single brand is used today as an organizing principle and a positioning tool. She most recently served as executive VP and group creative director.

Prior to RMG, Balai was the interactive group creative director for Martin|Williams and focused solely on interactive media for clients including: E*TRADE, Coleman, LL Bean, Lincoln Financial, Steelcase and Cargill. She holds a bachelor’s degree in fine arts from the University of Kansas.

Karelson, who partnered with Balai on the Hospira positioning and messaging project, joined RMG in 1986. She participates in agency management while also sharing her copywriting skill with clients. Her areas of expertise include B2B, medical, and arts and culture. Notable clients for Karelson in recent years have included



Tina Karelson, Co-president of Creative

OptumHealth Financial Services, 3M, Fairview Pharmacy Services and Arts Midwest World Fest.

Karelson specializes in distilling complex information into clear communications. Karelson most recently served as VP, creative director and board member. She has a master's degree in English language and literature, and bachelor's degrees in English and journalism from the University of Minnesota.

Prior to joining RMG, Kvålseth worked as a freelancer and as writer/creative director at Brooklyn Point. He also was a senior writer at Dalton Sherman Advertising and a copywriter at Martin|Williams and Carmichael Lynch. His clients have included Harley-Davidson, LL Bean, E*TRADE, Land O'Lakes and Payless ShoeSource. He has degrees in history, Norwegian and advertising from the University of Minnesota.

Kevin O'Callaghan, former president of creative, and Len Mitsch, former executive vice president/group creative director, will serve as vice president/executive creative directors.

About Risdall Marketing Group

Founded in 1972, Risdall Marketing Group has annual capitalized billings of \$228 million and more than 80 employees. Headquartered in New Brighton, Minn., Risdall is a full-service agency with 14 specialized divisions and is heralded as one of the oldest and most successful agencies in the Twin Cities. According to the 2009 *Twin Cities Business Annual Business Information Guide*, RMG is ranked as the largest Web developer, fourth largest PR agency and the seventh largest advertising agency in Minnesota. For more information, visit www.risdall.com.

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