

Insurance

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CYBER INSURANCE SIMPLIFIED

**ProWriters allows agents
to compare the market in seconds**

TECHNOLOGY STUMBLING BLOCKS

Which tech innovations are insurance agents still avoiding?

LEADING THE CONVERSATION

How Swiss Re is championing the value of resilience on the world stage

THE TALENT PIPELINE

Inside a Connecticut agency's groundbreaking apprenticeship program

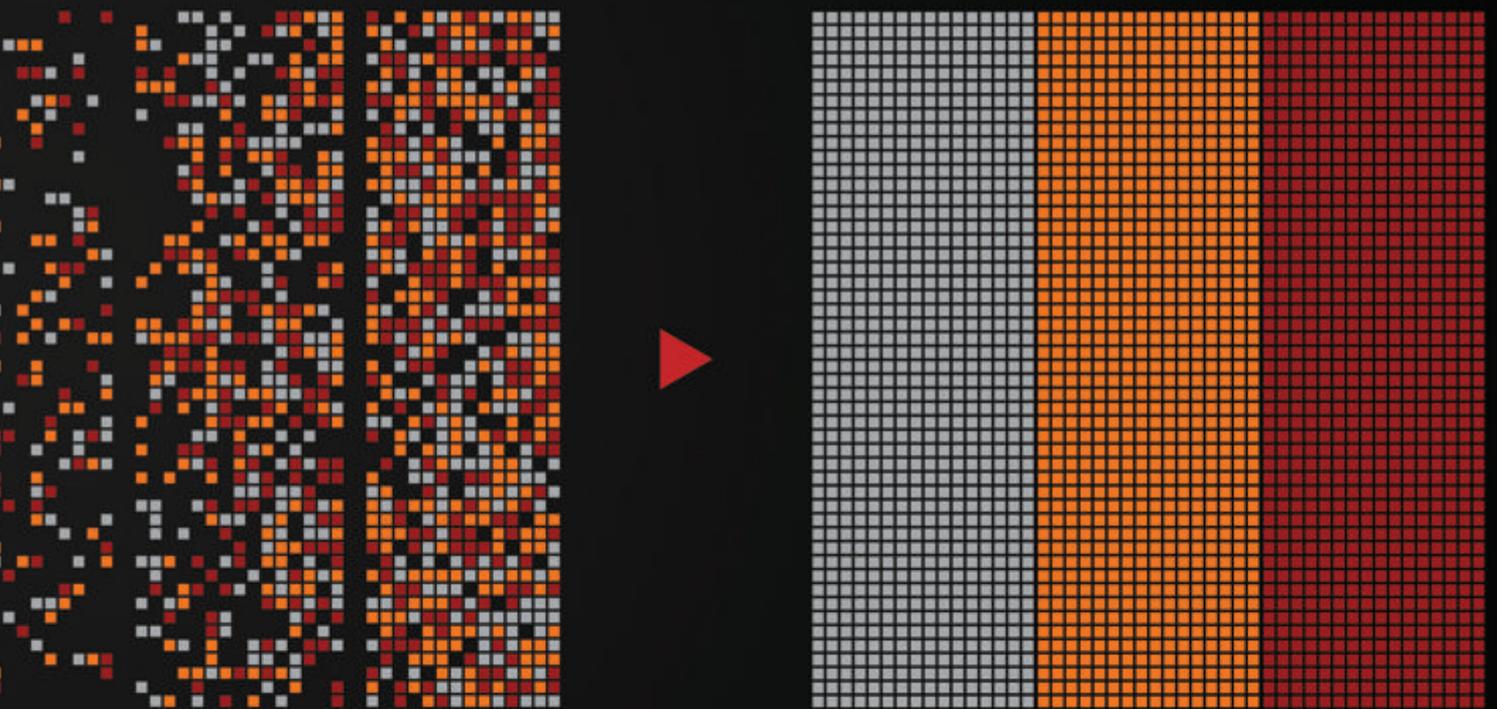


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IT'S PERSONAL

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Diving into the sharing economy

Still not used to writing '2020' on your correspondence yet? The year still sounds futuristic – but the reality is that most of our fanciful visions of the 'space age' are already here, from driverless cars to artificial intelligence to 3D printing.

Indeed, one concept that the insurance industry still hasn't come to terms with has actually been around for close to a decade: the sharing economy, which was crowned one of the ideas that would change the world by *Time* magazine in 2011. The concept hit the headlines again toward the end of last year when Uber lost its license in London after it was revealed that some 14,000 journeys had allegedly been uninsured.

While that controversy was more about Uber's issues with unauthorized drivers, it's still indicative of insurance's struggles with the concept. By its very nature, the sharing economy – from ride-hailing for a journey home to renting out your home on Airbnb – is a minefield for the sector, as it blurs the distinction between commercial and personal lines. Generally speaking, sharing economy platforms claim to be a go-between for the provider and the consumer – and absolve themselves of liability. It's a contentious point of debate: Should the

Those insurers able to grasp the concept of the sharing economy and create services that meet this need have a massive opportunity

consumer bear responsibility, or should the platform take the hit when things go wrong? It's this lack of clarity that's putting insurers in a tough spot.

Still, those able to grasp the concept of the sharing economy and create services that meet this need have a massive opportunity. According to a report from Lloyd's, 71% of consumers would be more likely to use sharing economy services if they came with insurance, and 70% said they'd be more likely to share their own assets.

Plenty of startups have grasped the concept, while mainstream insurers are slowly catching on – but as usual, it's those that act fastest that will reap the rewards. For brokers, meanwhile, it's about educating yourself quickly to explain what's out there and positioning yourself as an expert in an exciting field. It might be a sharing economy, but there's plenty of business to be selfish about.

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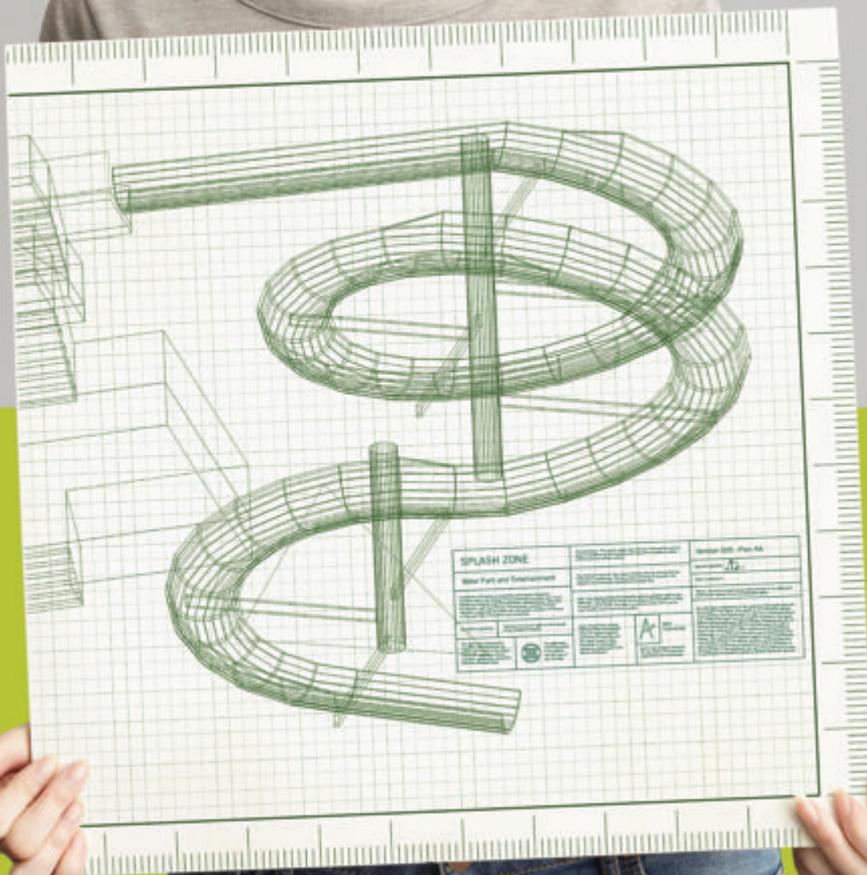
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STATISTICS

AVIATION CLAIM TRENDS



57%

Proportion of claims attributable to crashes or collisions



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Average cost of a claim due to a runway incident



\$360,000

Average cost of a claim due to a bird strike



1,000+

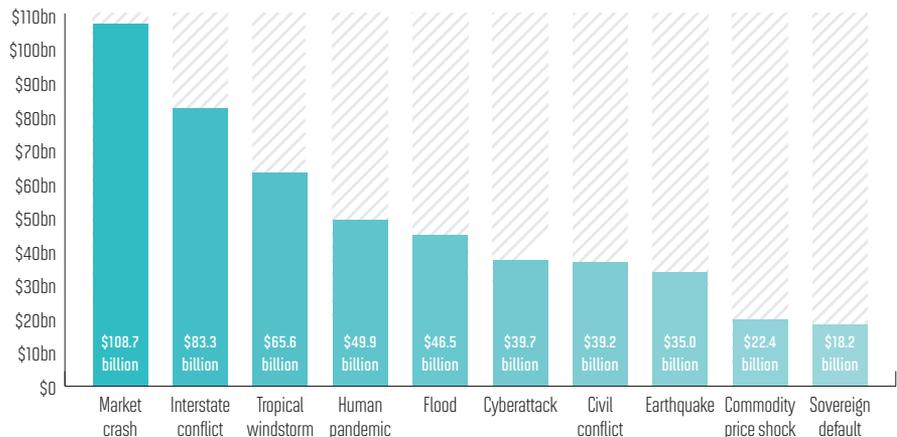
Number of bird strike claims received by insurers over the past five years

Source: Aviation Risk Report 2020, Allianz

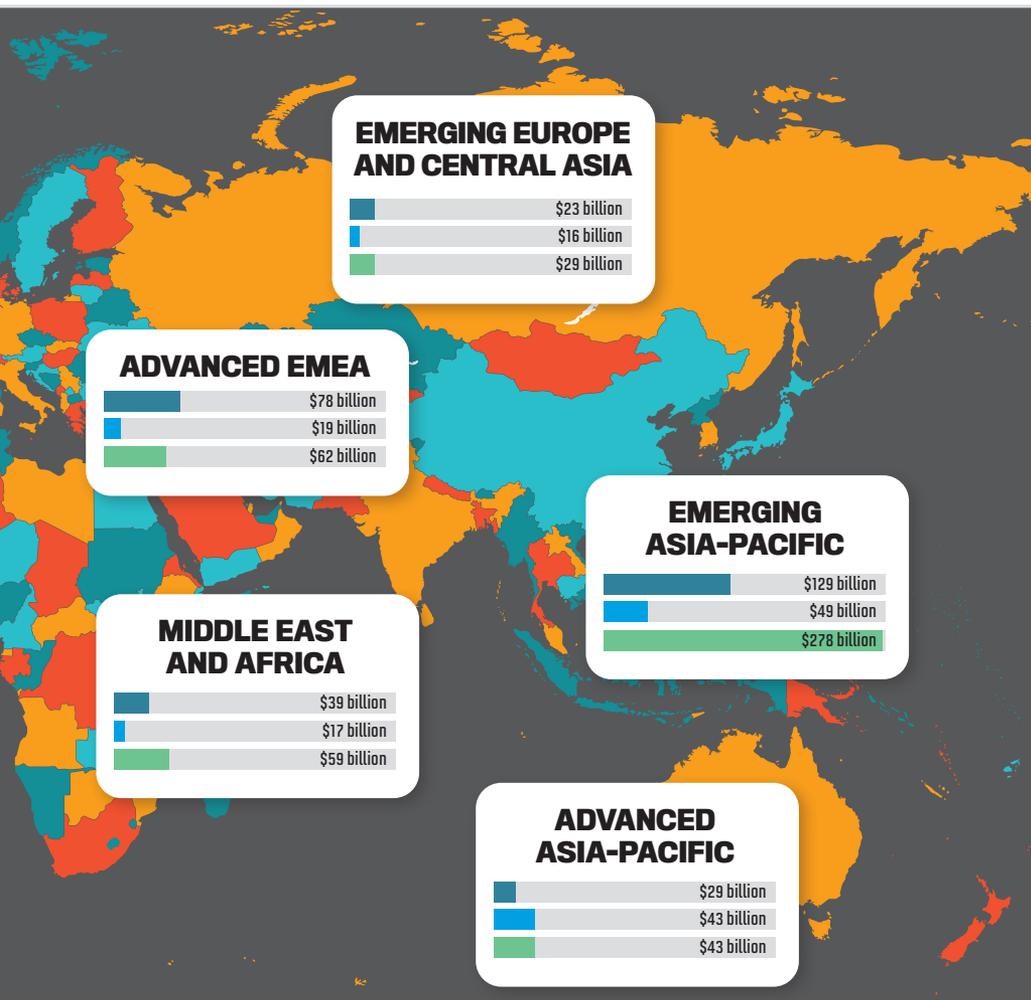


TOP THREATS TO GDP

According to the University of Cambridge's latest analysis of the potential impact of shocks to the world economy, the number-one threat to global GDP is a market crash, although natural catastrophes, which account for three of the top 10 threats, are also a major concern.



Source: Centre for Risk Studies, University of Cambridge, 2019



THE CATASTROPHE PROTECTION GAP

Swiss Re estimates the global insurance protection gap for natural catastrophes at around \$222 billion; the biggest gap in coverage is for earthquakes, which accounts for more than half of the total.

- Earthquakes: \$135 billion
- Floods: \$50 billion
- Storms: \$37 billion



Source: Swiss Re Institute

Source: Swiss Re Institute

MOST AT-RISK CITIES

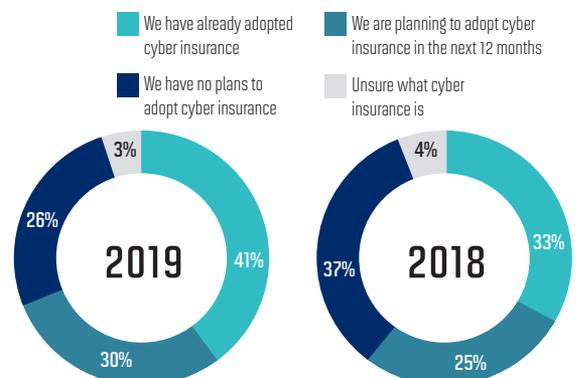
Two North American cities made the University of Cambridge's list of the global cities most likely to have their GDP depleted by a natural catastrophe, financial shock or geopolitical incident.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 TOKYO
GDP at risk: \$26.01 billion | 6 OSAKA
GDP at risk: \$12.29 billion |
| 2 NEW YORK CITY
GDP at risk: \$15.69 billion | 7 LOS ANGELES
GDP at risk: \$11.68 billion |
| 3 MANILA
GDP at risk: \$13.87 billion | 8 BAGHDAD
GDP at risk: \$9.88 billion |
| 4 ISTANBUL
GDP at risk: \$13.35 billion | 9 LONDON
GDP at risk: \$9.15 billion |
| 5 TAIPEI
GDP at risk: \$13.01 billion | 10 SHANGHAI
GDP at risk: \$9.05 billion |

Source: Centre for Risk Studies, University of Cambridge, 2019

CYBER INSURANCE UPTAKE GROWS

While cyber insurance uptake rates rose significantly between 2018 and 2019, Hiscox's latest study on the sector found that there's still a worrying gap – more than a quarter of businesses said they have no plans to purchase cyber insurance.



Source: Hiscox Cyber Readiness Report, Hiscox, 2019

HEAD TO HEAD



Should non-driving factors be used to set auto rates?

As telematic devices become more common, many are calling on auto insurers to ban the use of non-driving-related data



Jared Smollik

Vice president, personal lines actuarial and analytic products
ISO, a Verisk business

“Driving-related factors alone may not provide a complete picture of auto insurance risk. Age, gender, marital status and credit history are non-driving-related factors that have long been recognized by insurers and regulators as having direct bearing on risk to be assumed. Such factors tend to be outside a driver’s control but are often critical to accurate risk measurement.

It may also be impractical to deploy driving-focused technologies such as telematics to all vehicles. Without non-driving factors to serve as differentiators, pricing may become less actuarially equitable, at the risk of becoming excessive for some insureds or inadequate for others.”



Donald S. Hardy

Founder
QuantumBenefits.com

“Simply put, auto insurers should not use credit scores or residential addresses when determining rates. They should be permitted to use driving records only.

Further, ambulance chasers should not be permitted to advertise how much they got from an insurance company for someone injured in an accident. Obviously, they should be allowed to say what services they provide; however, advertising what they recover causes accidents.

Also, most auto insurers deny claims of property damage. They think the property owner will file under their property coverage policy and therefore will not have to pay for property damage.”



Chris Moulder

Senior vice president/broker
Worldwide Facilities

“Non-driving factors such as gender, marital status and credit score have long played a role in auto underwriting. These factors were developed partially because insurers had no other objective measure to validate the risk behavior of particular drivers.

Nowadays, technology provides an array of options from which an insurer can establish rates. Telematics devices provide valuable insights that allow insurers to move away from non-driving criteria entirely and instead allow them to base their pricing on driving risk alone. A complete shift to behavior-based pricing will take time as insurers and regulators adapt to the rapid pace of change.”

DRIVING INNOVATION

According to ResearchandMarkets.com, the number of telematics-based insurance policies is expected to grow from 10.6 million at the end of 2018 to almost 50 million by 2023. Not only do telematics lend themselves to creating safe roads (a study by the journal *Marketing Science* revealed that drivers enrolled in a telematics program showed an average 21% drop in hard braking over the course of six months), but unsafe drivers can be made to pay the price: 20% of the drivers in Progressive’s Snapshot program were hit with a rate increase due to the risky nature of their driving. “If auto insurance prices are transparent, data-driven and attributed primarily to risk factors under the control of the driver, that could lead to more fairness and improved driver performance,” noted Justin Brookman, director of consumer privacy and technology for *Consumer Reports*.



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What agents want - and fear

From embracing data to adopting customer-facing tools, insurance agents are largely changing with the times – but there are still a few areas where they're reluctant to get on board

NOW THAT A.M. Best has begun taking insurers' ability to innovate into account in its rating methodology, the message is clear: Technology is part and parcel of the insurance industry. And it's no different for brokers and agents.

A recent report from Argo Group delved into the minds of brokers and small businesses to uncover their expectations around topics like climate change, cryptocurrency and autonomous vehicles. The survey found that 77% of brokers expect autonomous vehicle usage to reduce the number and severity of accidents, while 59% expect it to help decrease insurance premiums.

However, other technologies aren't as

they're thinking about the various parts of technology that will impact their business," says Jeff Canfield, head of innovation for Argo Group. "There were a few surprising results where the concern is actually less this year than it was last year. I don't have a good answer for why that is, other than my suspicion that for things like autonomous vehicles and climate change, they probably view it as much more of a long-term threat and not an immediate threat, whereas in the past, I think there was an assumption that these were both going to impact us sooner rather than later."

While technological innovation is bringing benefits to customers both inside



“One of the threats that we hear often is the fear of being left behind in terms of automation”

Jeff Canfield, Argo Group

high on brokers' radar. Thirty-nine percent said they're only somewhat familiar with the Internet of Things, although 91% named the IoT as the dominant technology threat over the next 12 months.

“The results tell us that, at the very least,

and outside of insurance, many brokers are concerned about the pace of change and what it will mean for insurance roles in the future.

“One of the threats that's not outlined in the survey, but that we hear often, is the fear of being left behind in terms of automation,”



Canfield says. “If others are automating tasks and using RPA [robotic process automation] to do things without adding to headcount and you're not, there's a fear that you're going to have an expense issue that others are not, and ultimately that's going to impact your financial results.”

Nonetheless, brokers are already reaping the rewards of technology in their day-to-day processes. Many are using data and analytics, for example, to apply more predictive modeling in their work.

“You can predict when a claim might happen, you can predict the severity of a claim, and you can predict losses based on location or weather,” Canfield says. “There's a number of applications around predictive analytics. What's interesting is that there was originally a fear around whether it would replace the underwriting role, but the reality



BROKERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD TECH



45%

of brokers in the US said cost is the most significant barrier to innovation



48%

say their clients use IoT devices such as sensors and monitors to mitigate risks



73%

of brokers agree that artificial intelligence will make them work smarter



71%

are concerned that AI will significantly disrupt traditional insurance distribution models

Source: The Future of Insurance, Argo Group, 2019

is that these tools are going to supplement what brokers, agents and underwriters do on a daily basis.”

Michael Howe, senior vice president of product management at Applied Systems,

he says. “I am encouraged that people are willing to experiment with new technologies, not just for the sake of technology, but because they’re trying to make their business better, and that’s good for everyone.”



“Agencies are letting go of that belief that the relationship [with customers] always has to be human”

Michael Howe, Applied Systems

sees the pace of change and innovation in the agency channel as a good thing.

“Their willingness to experiment and invest in technology, to try to make their businesses better and serve their customers in different ways, is great for the channel,”

The most interesting and encouraging part of this digital evolution, from Howe’s perspective, is the focus around customer-facing digital tools. This marks a change from the traditional ways agents communicated with clients in the not-so-distant past.

“Agents traditionally come from the ‘I’d rather have a human connection; I’d rather go meet the person at the local Starbucks and build a relationship that way’ mentality, so it’s encouraging to see them augment that with all kinds of online tools and technologies,” Howe says. “It’s about building that online relationship with customers, and I think that’s great because the nature of the customer is changing.

“We’re seeing lots of interest in tools that allow agencies to extend their services in electronic ways, online ways and mobile ways. That’s good because agencies are letting go of that belief that the relationship always has to be human. That human connection still matters, but it can also be these other things, because it allows the customer to interact with them in the way the customer wants, not necessarily the way the agent wants.” **IB**

CORPORATE

ACQUIRER	TARGET	COMMENTS
AssuredPartners	Surety Solutions Insurance Services	John Page and Ryan Tash will retain operational leadership of the team, which reports \$3.3 million in annualized revenues
Gallagher	Capsicum Reinsurance Brokers	Gallagher will raise its stake in the reinsurance broker to 100%
Hub International	SilverStone Group	Its acquisition of the Nebraska brokerage has prompted Hub to create a new regional office, known as Hub Great Plains
H.W. Kaufman Group	Barbican Protect	The move will rebrand UK-based Barbican Protect as Burns & Wilcox and make it part of H.W. Kaufman Group London
MetLife	PetFirst Healthcare	The acquisition marks MetLife's entry into the fast-growing pet insurance market
Patriot Growth Insurance Services	Shapiro Insurance Group	The deal between the two insurance agencies will enable Patriot's expansion into Florida
Worldwide Facilities	Risk Management Advisory Group	Its purchase of the Southeast-focused managing wholesale broker will give Worldwide Facilities a broader geographical footprint

**MetLife enters the pet insurance market**

MetLife has taken the acquisition route to enter the world of pet insurance, snapping up pet health insurance administrator PetFirst Healthcare. MetLife described the pet insurance market as “under-penetrated and fast-growing,” highlighting the segment’s annual growth rate of more than 20% since 2014.

“Today’s employees have an increasing expectation of their employer to support their lives holistically, and offering pet insurance provides our customers’ employees additional support,” said Ramy Tadros, president of US business at MetLife, adding that pet insurance has become an increasingly important voluntary benefit for employers to offer.

PRODUCTS



Beazley widens life sciences offering

Specialist insurer Beazley has expanded its life sciences coverage to small businesses. Building on its expertise in underwriting life sciences risks and managing claims for mid-sized and large companies, Beazley’s BioSecure policy offers customized protection against exposures in the pharma, biotech and medical device sectors. The policy provides worldwide coverage for US-based private enterprise firms and includes coverage for products/completed operations, clinical research and healthcare professional services, clinical trial medical expenses and monitoring expenses, and general liability.


Swiss Re unveils globally standardized policies

Swiss Re Corporate Solutions has introduced ONE Form, a tool that creates globally standardized master and local policies. Designed to provide greater policy accuracy and increased contract certainty, ONE Form enables the closest possible alignment of master and local policies while respecting local requirements and expectations. Embedded in the IT systems used by Swiss Re Corporate Solutions to manage international programs, the tool also improves the customer experience for brokers and their clients by facilitating faster policy issuance and tax and legal compliance.



Lloyd's launches groundbreaking spaceflight policy

Lloyd's of London is targeting the emerging private spaceflight industry with a new modular space insurance policy designed to cater to the distinct needs of this rapidly growing sector. Available only in the Lloyd's market, the Lift Space product is backed by a consortium of 18 syndicates, led by Brit and Hiscox MGA. With a capacity of \$25 million per risk, the policy will pay out in the event of accidents such as exploding rockets, in-orbit collisions or damage to components while being transported pre-launch.

0110
1001
1010

Marsh enhances cyber risk proposition

Marsh has rolled out an enhanced suite of consulting capabilities designed to offer clients new insight into the impact of their cybersecurity investments. The capabilities will allow clients to evaluate the effectiveness of cybersecurity controls and prioritize risk mitigation accordingly, use data-driven 'what if' scenarios to assess existing and future cyber investments, evolve cybersecurity from technical jargon to a board-level conversation, more easily meet cyber risk disclosures and reporting requirements, and use financial analysis of cyber risk exposure to inform risk management strategies.



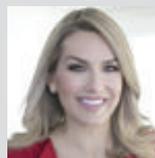
W.R. Berkley restructures healthcare portfolio

W. R. Berkley has combined BerkleyMed and Berkley Healthcare into a single unit, to be known as Berkley Healthcare, with the aim of offering a more cohesive range of products and services. Under the new structure, the BerkleyMed team will be responsible for all medical coverages, while the Berkley Healthcare Financial Lines team will be responsible for financial lines. The combination of the two as Berkley Healthcare will allow the unit to "respond to the changing needs of the growing and evolving healthcare industry through a single source," the company said.

PEOPLE

NAME	LEAVING	JOINING	NEW POSITION
Evan Gilroy	Brown & Brown Insurance	Venbrook Insurance Services	Vice president, employee benefits
Jeff Grange	QBE North America	Argo Group International Holdings	Executive vice president, US operations
Adam Karkowsky	N/A	AmTrust Financial Services	President
Mark Pasko	N/A	QBE North America	Chief legal officer
Leo Portes	Alliant Insurance Services	JAG Insurance Group	Chief insurance officer
Nicole Rickett	National Interstate Insurance Company	Worldwide Facilities	Vice president, transportation team
James Romano	Fiduciary Investment Advisors	The MEMIC Group	Vice president and corporate risk officer
Anita Sathe	CoverHound	Marsh	Global leader, Bluestream; leader of US affinity business
Jen Tadin	N/A	Gallagher	President of small business, US retail P&C brokerage division
Maureen Westling	National Flood Services	Crawford & Company	Vice president, US catastrophe services operations

Gallagher names small business leader



Jen Tadin, who most recently served as national sales director and client experience leader for small business at Gallagher, has been promoted to president of small business for the company's US retail property & casualty brokerage division. Tadin joined Gallagher in 2014 as director of sales for small business. Prior to that, she helped build and lead most commercial sales teams for both The Hartford and Travelers.

"Jen's passion for and connection to the small business community, paired with her expertise of their unique operational models, made her a natural choice for the role," said Jay Eshelman, small business and affinity practices director at Gallagher.

Worldwide Facilities welcomes new VP



National wholesale insurance broker Worldwide Facilities has added Nicole Rickett to its roster as vice president. Moving over from National Interstate Insurance Company, where she was a top producer in transportation and national accounts, Rickett is now part of Worldwide Facilities' Chicago/Atlanta transportation team.

"Nicole has a strong track record and the experience necessary to meet the specialized needs of our industry," said David Fiske, senior vice president and Chicago branch manager at Worldwide Facilities. "She brings a broad range of knowledge and will certainly be an excellent addition to our team."

WORKERS' COMP UPDATE

NEWS BRIEFS



MEMIC awards \$22 million in dividends to employers

Mutual insurance company MEMIC has given back a total of \$22 million to around 18,000 of its workers' comp clients in Maine. "Maine employers who insure with MEMIC have truly earned this dividend," said MEMIC president and CEO Michael Bourque. "We work together with our policyholders to reduce injuries through safety training, engineering and education. We also help injured workers return to health and get back to work as soon as possible. But employers and employees have to do the hard work to make it happen."



Mitchell/Genex expands with CompAlliance acquisition

Managed care services firm CompAlliance has been snapped up by Mitchell/Genex. The California-based provider of cost containment and disability management solutions, which was born in 2018 from a merger between Mitchell International and Genex Services, purchased the Missouri-based company for an undisclosed sum. "CompAlliance is very excited to join Mitchell/Genex as we continue to lead the way in managing medical costs and the return-to-work process of injured or disabled employees," said CompAlliance president Jim Weir.



Texas Mutual hands out more than \$1 million in grants

Workers' comp insurer Texas Mutual has distributed \$1.1 million in grants across the state to support workforce development efforts. The grants will help 16 different organizations with workforce development and job-skill training programs that will not only benefit the organizations' workers, but their local communities as well. "When current

and potential employees have access to safety training, the ability to develop new job skills, and increased health and safety awareness, workplaces – and the overall Texas workforce – are stronger and safer," said Texas Mutual president and CEO Rich Gergasko.



Sixteen charged with workers' compensation fraud in Florida

An undercover operation by the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office has led to the arrest of 16 people in Florida on charges of unlicensed contracting and workers' compensation fraud. Detectives worked with the Sarasota County Building Department, the Florida Department of Financial Services Division of Insurance Fraud, and the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation to set up a sting operation designed to catch unlicensed and unregistered home repair professionals without proper workers' comp coverage. "Consumers are exposing themselves to financial and physical risk by allowing these people to enter their home unlicensed and, in some cases, with criminal histories," said Sarasota sheriff Tom Knight.



The Hartford expands Internet of Things capabilities

Workers' compensation insurer The Hartford has given its Internet of Things Innovation Lab and capabilities a boost by combining the latest network-connected technology with its data and risk management expertise to improve workplace safety and aid in property damage prevention. The lab collaborates with a variety of vendors to equip workers with wearable technology that generates data that can be analyzed to implement safer workplace practices and potentially improve operational efficiency. In the past three months, the lab has installed more than 1,000 devices for customers, and The Hartford plans to grow the program significantly.

The soft market continues

Declines in loss costs and claim severity continue to drive workers' comp rate reductions across the US

The workers' compensation market continues to perform well from a profitability standpoint relative to other casualty lines, a trend that's been in place for several years and is likely to continue through 2020. Some of the factors driving the positive performance include falling loss costs and relatively benign claim severity, as well as increased competition in the insurance marketplace.

The decline in loss frequency has been seen across the workers' compensation market for many years. Douglas Dirks, president and CEO at Employers Insurance Company, a publicly traded national insurance carrier that specializes in workers' compensation, believes the decline in loss frequency is "a reflection of the movement of the US economy from manufacturing to service," which has been happening for decades.

"I do believe workplaces are safer today than they have been historically," he adds. "Again, that's a longer-term trend, and I believe that employers, regulators and insurers have taken that subject much more seriously in recent years and have been more focused on maintaining a safe workplace."

"In terms of what's happened on the claims cost side and maybe severity, there have been great gains made in medical management of claims really driving better outcomes for injured workers and, consequently, better outcomes financially for insurers. Combine that with the declining frequency trend, and you see a general overall decline in loss cost virtually everywhere."

Because loss costs continue to decline in almost all states, rate decreases will likely continue in tandem through 2020, Dirks predicts.

“The declining rate environment will still have a significant impact on the industry’s top line, and, to the extent that there are market participants who are focused on maintaining top line with little regard to profitability, that

“The declining rate environment will still have a significant impact on the industry’s top line, and that will keep this market soft for a longer period of time”

will keep this market soft for a longer period of time – and I think 2020 will look that way,” he says. “At Employers, we’ve taken the other view, which is that we’re going to focus on the bottom line, and the top line will be what it is based on the underlying market conditions.

“I would also expect, given what the federal government announced in December, that we will probably see a relatively stable fixed income market in 2020, and since most of the industry’s investment balance sheet is tied to fixed income securities, I think we’ll see flat to potentially declining yields for the industry balance sheet. That could have the effect of extending the soft market a little bit longer.”



Patrick Edwards

Area senior vice president and workers’ compensation practice leader
RISK PLACEMENT SERVICES

Years in the industry
35+

Fast fact
Before joining RPS, Edwards worked as a scout for an Ontario-based hockey club

■ Q&A

An often overlooked risk

● **White-collar professionals aren’t top of mind for workers’ compensation insurance. How much of a risk is there?**

They are not top of mind, but they should be. In nearly all states, it’s a legally required cover, but because these are generally lower-premium accounts, they are not as carefully considered or risk managed. White-collar workers experience loss activity at a greater level than you would typically think.

Most people believe repetitive motion claims due to keyboard use and such are the most common loss. While they are in the top three, slips and falls are actually the number-one cause of claims from accounts we see. It wouldn’t seem obvious, but the frequency and severity can be high, depending on the risk type. Auto-related claims are also a leading cause of loss. Salespeople, attorneys and accountants all drive for work and can get into accidents while on the job, and this is a huge exposure.

● **What are some of the biggest challenges in managing this risk?**

In higher-hazard industries, you can identify specific strategies that can have a big impact on severity, but for white collar, the exposures are caused by such a variety of issues that you can’t just pinpoint one or two risk mitigation programs that will make an impact. It’s a whole lot of little things that add up. White-collar firms are also not likely to have a safety leader, so you have people monitoring the risks but not the expertise to identify the issues and implement.

● **What best-practice risk mitigation tactics should organizations use?**

The best thing an agent can do to help their client is to leverage the carrier’s loss control safety programs to facilitate risk improvement. For example, firms can implement driver safety programs and cleanup strategies in offices and parking lots to reduce claims exposure. Small accounts won’t get the one-on-one assistance from carriers, but there are many self-help tools. In the end, it’s really incumbent on the insured, with guidance from their agent, to facilitate a strong safety program strategy.

● **Where do you see the workers’ compensation market headed in 2020?**

As a former underwriter for three companies and a specialized workers’ comp broker for 20 years, the marketplace is about as soft as I’ve seen. We have seen six to seven straight years of class rate reductions in a majority of states, coupled with an increase in carrier capacity.

Also, despite rate reductions, medical costs, by and large, are still rising. The combined-ratio improvement lies more with proactive safety management by insureds and a healthy economy that fosters reduced frequency, associated with ease of job placement aiding return to work. Right now, the combined ratios are looking good, but it is a lagging indicator.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Why technology isn't a silver bullet

An insurtech leader lifts the lid on why each business's tech transformation will look a bit different



The two key drivers of technology in insurance, according to Charles Taylor InsureTech CEO Jason Sahota, are the revenue side with its emphasis on customer retention and acquisition, and the operational cost and effectiveness side. He believes that to move the dial and build a successful business strategy, you need to use both.

Charles Taylor's InsureTech arm was launched, Sahota says, "with a view of bringing technology to really solve business problems ... not to be a software product provider." He adds that to really comprehend

business problems, you have to understand where the client is, where they want to go and how to help them get there.

"The differentiating factor in every business is the people," he says. "And we don't want everybody to be the same, so the change journey is different for every organization. But technology is not the silver bullet on its own."

Sahota believes there's a simple explanation for why industry players might be slow to embrace digital transformation.

"I think there's just the general underlying [principle] that human beings don't

like change," he says, although he adds that because we live in a world where change is the norm, businesses that are going to survive in any industry must be agile.

One source of confusion for many is the mix-up between digital transformation and digitization. Digitization, Sahota explains, is when organizations apply technology to an existing way of working, but it doesn't change the underlying process. Digital transforma-

"We don't want everybody to be the same, so the change journey is different for every organization"

tion, on the other hand, involves changing the way of working through the use of technology.

In the insurance sector, digital transformation mainly revolves around a move toward customer-centricity, Sahota says. He concedes that it's difficult for an industry that has traditionally been product-focused to emphasize the customer instead, but he points out that this is a fundamental adjustment required of and being embraced by insurance – and there has never been a better time for innovative insurance solutions.

"To watch your ideas and visions become a reality and watch individuals achieve their potential [is] fundamentally what I do now," Sahota says. "I have the best role ever."

NEWS BRIEFS



Applied Systems snaps up Indio Technologies

Brokerage management software provider Applied Systems has agreed to acquire Indio Technologies, a tech solution for insurance applications and renewals. The acquisition will help Applied achieve its goal of digitizing the commercial lines submissions process. By integrating Indio's solution with Applied Epic, Applied hopes to provide brokers with a collaborative and automated data capture experience, increase the speed of insurance applications and renewals, lower costs, and reduce the risk of errors and omissions.



Price tag of Lloyd's innovation plan revealed

A recent report by the *Financial Times* revealed the expected cost of Lloyd's of London's ambitious plan to become "the most advanced marketplace in the world": around \$394.5 million. Lloyd's intends to fund the initiative via senior debt, taking the marketplace's total amount of debt in issue to around \$1.44 billion, and thereby avoiding increasing levies to members. Under the Blueprint One plan, Lloyd's plans to cut costs by streamlining processes and launching services such as an electronic risk exchange.



Anita Sathe

Global leader of Bluestream and leader of US affinity business
MARSH

Years in the industry
15

Fast fact
Sathe joined Marsh at the end of 2019 from CoverHound, where she served as chief strategy officer

Q&A

Connecting the dots with APIs

● What is Marsh’s Bluestream platform, and how have your clients responded to it?

Bluestream is Marsh’s cloud-based digital broker platform for the affinity market. It’s a technology platform that will enable transactional insurance deals at a global scale, and it’s a key part of Marsh’s strategy in helping larger clients implement better overall risk management.

Think about every insurance need that a large affinity group might have – not just at the time of finance, but on an ongoing basis. Bluestream enables those transactions to be done via technology.

As clients become more technologically savvy, Marsh is making sure it stays relevant and top of mind for customers when they come to us for risk management solutions. We launched the platform in November 2018, and it’s amazing to see what the team has accomplished over the last year, gaining lots of traction in the US, Europe and Asia-Pacific.

● Bluestream connects with the global insurance marketplace through application program interfaces [APIs]. Why are APIs so important for the platform?

APIs are essentially translators that can digitally connect platforms from different companies so they can seamlessly communicate with each other. They’re especially important for Bluestream because no single insurance carrier will be able to provide insurance for all of the risk that an affinity might have.

As a digital intermediary, Marsh’s Bluestream has this connectivity with the global marketplace and with multiple insurance products through APIs, enabling us to provide those solutions for our affinity clients.

● Are there any common technology roadblocks that affinity clients often face?

Marsh has clients who are technologically savvy, and we have clients who are less technologically savvy. In general, when I look at insurance distribution, I don’t think of technology as the be all and end all. I still believe there’s a very strong need for a human role in facilitating this distribution.

The way I look at technology is, how can it get rid of some of the more mundane parts of the transaction and make it more efficient? Affinities love being able to reach their customers or their vendors via email and being able to track things digitally, but they also want somebody to be available to answer the phone if employees, customers or vendors have insurance questions.

It’s important to have the technology up and running, but also to have the people and the processes in place to be able to give these affinity stakeholders a great experience when they’re looking at Bluestream to satisfy their insurance needs. It’s not just about technology; it’s an overarching framework of having the right people, the right processes and the right technology so that people can get insurance where and when they need it.



Openly completes \$7.65 million seed funding round

Tech-enabled home insurance provider Openly has finished a \$7.65 million seed round of funding led by Gradient Ventures, Google’s AI-focused venture fund. Openly, which sells home insurance exclusively through independent agents, enables quote generation in less than 20 seconds. The insurtech announced its market debut in Arizona and Illinois; with the new capital, it plans to expand into Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Tennessee over the next few months, as well as four additional states in the near future.



ICE InsureTech now a Radar Live collaborator

Brokerage giant Willis Towers

Watson has added ICE InsureTech to its global Radar Live collaboration program. Being part of Radar Live will allow ICE to deploy Radar Live’s specialist point-of-quote insurance rating and rules solution to strengthen its integration capability and product offering. “Integrating Radar Live will provide ICE customers with exceptional efficiency and flexibility to have a competitive edge in a changing marketplace,” said ICE InsureTech CEO Andrew Passfield.



Global regulators warn of increasing tech presence

The Financial Stability

Board has warned that the increasing activity of tech giants in the financial sector might pose risks to global financial stability. The global body of financial regulators suggested that competition from firms such as Google, Facebook and Alibaba might “reduce the resilience of financial institutions ... An overarching consideration is that a small number of BigTech firms may in the future come to dominate, rather than diversify, the provision of certain financial services.”

BUILDING A MORE RESILIENT WORLD

As Swiss Re reinsurance CEO **Moses Ojeisekhoba** marks his 30th year in insurance, he reflects on the industry's vital role in a risk-laden world

WHILE MOSES OJEISEKHOPA currently has oversight over one of the world's leading reinsurance units, he started his insurance career as far away from the world of reinsurance as possible.

In 1990, Ojeisekhoba was a few years out of school and took a job as a life insurance agent in California, selling coverage door-to-door for Prudential. The experience taught him about the technical components of insurance and its benefits for individuals and society, as well as the misunderstandings people often have about insurance. He also discovered that sales wasn't his passion – so after four years, he took the next step in his career.

"I went to a small regional carrier as an underwriter trainee on the P&C side, where I got into more of the technical details in insurance," Ojeisekhoba says, adding that his educational background in statistics gave him a leg up in the role. "Then I was headhunted from that company after a few years by Chubb, first to run a regional small-business underwriting shop, where I got into even more details around the technical side of the business and understood the entire value chain more."

Ojeisekhoba took time off to complete a master's degree in management at the London Business School; when he returned to Chubb, he knew he wanted to have a role that went beyond underwriting. In 1999, he became the corporate product development manager in New Jersey and later moved to London

as strategic marketing manager for Chubb Europe. In 2002, he was appointed international field operations officer for personal insurance before jetting off to Asia to lead the Asia-Pacific region in 2009.

"That's where Swiss Re came knocking on my door after about 16 years," he says. "The Swiss Re proposition was very interesting because it got me partly back into life insurance, so I was running both life and non-life, but I also always had tremendous admiration for Swiss Re as a knowledge company."

they've been able to deliver in this regard is one that continues to stand out and one that will keep me interested in the industry for the remainder of my career."

Driving resilience

The fact that Swiss Re is a major thought leader gives Ojeisekhoba an opportunity to spend time with world leaders to address resilience as countries across the world face the impacts of climate change.

"They look to firms like Swiss Re to try to

"[Governments] look to firms like Swiss Re to try to formulate policies, come up with the right level of research and generate the right level of knowledge, and that comes back to this concept of trying to make the world more resilient"

Ojeisekhoba's role as Swiss Re's reinsurance CEO is more than just a job – it has also been an opportunity to help make the world more resilient.

"I feel extremely proud and privileged to be able to work in this industry," he says. "When I look at the resilience that insurance and reinsurance is able to provide and the companies that I have worked for, the critical role that

formulate policies, come up with the right level of research and generate the right level of knowledge, and that comes back to this concept of trying to make the world more resilient," he says. "For me, that's just fantastic about working for a company like Swiss Re."

Swiss Re's thought leadership role is critical as environmental changes intensify and risks become concentrated in urban areas prone



PROFILE

Name: Moses Djeisekhoba
Title: CEO, reinsurance
Company: Swiss Re
Based in: Zurich, Switzerland
Years in the industry: 30

INDUSTRY ICON

to natural catastrophes – think hurricanes in Miami, wildfires around Sydney or flooding in Northern England. And these aren't the only risks that are complicating the work of businesses every day.

“If you look at demographic change and societies aging significantly, if you look at the severity of events from climate change and the impact that has on the industry overall, or if you look more broadly at technological advancement, the greater complexity of business relationships, and the interconnectedness of business relationships – all of these things are [leading to] far greater exposure,” Ojeisekhoba says. “If you look at some of the issues from a geopolitical standpoint or some of the issues such as trade wars, those also have an impact on global growth.”

“The advancements that exist today around technology really force us to challenge some of the paradigms that have always existed in the industry”

Insurance plays a vital role in helping societies adapt to these risks. “What we see clearly over the next five years is that exposures will continue to grow,” Ojeisekhoba says, “and because exposures will continue to grow, we have to position ourselves in a way that allows us to come alongside our clients to help them in their business.”

Deepening knowledge about risks

In light of these challenges and the ways the reinsurance environment has evolved – from the impact of technology to the amount of capital that's flooding into the industry – Swiss Re has a chance to help develop a greater understanding about risk and resilience among primary insurance companies.

“There's a lot of misunderstanding about what's happening, and we spend a lot of time and invest a lot of money and resources in

understanding some of these emerging risks,” Ojeisekhoba says. “If you don't price that risk appropriately – if you generate way too much profit or you generate a loss from a risk – you create a situation that's not sustainable in the long term, which, in our view, harms the resilience of the overall industry.”

Using technology to help insurers become more efficient and reduce volatility in their earnings is another area of focus for Swiss Re. Whether it's modeling for perils like flood, developing new platforms to help insurance companies offer coverage or investing in research on critical illnesses that have historically been uninsurable, Swiss Re is on the cutting edge of innovation.

“That's the beauty and excitement of the advancements that exist today around tech-

nology, which really force us to challenge some of the paradigms that have always existed in the industry,” Ojeisekhoba says. “In the absence of addressing some of these challenges, what we clearly could see over a 10- to 20-year period was the protection gap continuing to grow. As an industry, if all you do is satisfy the needs of only 10% or 20% of consumers, at some point I think consumers begin to wonder how relevant this industry is in reality, and I think that was a danger for us as an industry if we didn't address some of these unmet needs.”

Swiss Re's strategies to drive growth by making insurance companies and their clients more resilient are paying off. “When we look at the results so far,” Ojeisekhoba says, “the growth that we're experiencing is mainly because we've focused on being much more relevant to our clients' business.” 

SWISS RE AT A GLANCE



1863

Year founded



Zurich, Switzerland

Global headquarters



80

Number of offices worldwide



14,500

Number of employees worldwide



\$36.4 billion

Gross written premium for FY 2018



Evolve or fall short

Insurers must adapt to meet a higher standard or suffer the consequences, writes **Bill Pieroni**

AS VISIONARY author William Gibson said, “The future is already here – it’s just not evenly distributed.” By investing in new technological capabilities – and, more importantly, developing new operating models to fully leverage that technology – forward-looking insurers have opened up unprecedented avenues for sustainable value creation. Simply put, they are setting a higher bar, and insurers must embrace transformational change if they wish to be top competitors.

While there are many variations in the strategies carriers can pursue, they fall into four fundamental areas: operational excellence, customer intimacy, product leadership and innovation. Historically, insurers have made a conscious decision to focus on one approach. While excelling at one didn’t give them license to neglect the others, they could be confident that effectively executing their primary chosen strategy gave them a reasonable chance of success. This may no longer be true.

In 2018, for the first time, ACORD’s ongoing US Property & Casualty Value Creation Study found that sustainable value creation requires simultaneous superiority across all four fundamental strategies. This was rather shocking – an achievement that had previously been considered unrealistic is now not only possible, but in fact a prerequisite for success.

How are market-leading carriers and brokers accomplishing this unprecedented feat? They are leveraging the accumulated benefits of committed, thoughtful investments in tech-centric capabilities. High-performing insurers are spending more than their competitors on technological development, rendering traditional conventional wisdom obsolete.

For example, forward-thinking brokers have allocated resources to acquiring, synthesizing and leveraging data on a real-time basis, allowing them to deliver relevant insights at the moment of value. They are using that data to craft a superior experience when interacting with customers while their competitors are analyzing that data long after the event.

Digitally mature capabilities and informational economies of scale allow these carriers to simultaneously execute across all four fundamental strategies, despite finite

“High-performing insurers are spending more than their competitors on technological development, rendering traditional conventional wisdom obsolete”

resources. For example, historically there has always been an inverse relationship between loss adjustment expense and pure loss – spending on one meant saving money on the other. However, carriers that have invested in digital capabilities are now managing to underspend on both simultaneously.

Again, this is not a future possibility – it’s already happening. Top-performing insurers have already integrated new technologies into their operating models in a way that allows them to deliver on all strategic options. Other insurers will need to implement disciplined transformation efforts to effectively compete.

Unfortunately, our industry is one with notoriously significant barriers to change. In

fact, our research indicates that two-thirds of insurance industry change efforts fail to meet expectations, due to several related factors:

- **Risk-averse nature:** Though we trade in risk every day, insurance professionals eschew it whenever possible.
- **Stability and consistency:** Predictable, stable financial performance is seen as a key objective by leadership and shareholders alike.
- **Past as predictor:** Insurance is built upon models that look to past data to evaluate future risk, inhibiting the development of new ideas.
- **Legacy as advantage:** Most insurers derive key advantages from their legacy, whether brand, processes or technology. Even the thought of abandoning them is unnerving.
- **Feedback loop:** With the previous factors in mind, it’s not surprising that company measures and incentives typically reward maintenance of the status quo.

Insurers that wish to join – or remain among – the ranks of top competitors must overcome these barriers and embrace true

transformational change. Incremental investment in discrete technologies and value chain segments is not enough – they must implement enterprise programs that leverage innovation to drive differentiating capabilities. Only by merging operations and technology to develop fundamentally new operating models can insurers execute across all strategies simultaneously – a baseline requirement for future success. **IB**

Bill Pieroni is president and CEO of ACORD, the global insurance standards-setting body. His insurance industry experience includes senior positions at Marsh, State Farm, Aon, IBM, McKinsey and Accenture.



TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020

TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020

Meet 47 market experts who have mastered a specific area of expertise to help secure coverage for specialty clients and hard-to-place risks

FROM AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES to zip-line courses, from chemical companies to schools, the industries that require special insurance coverage are countless. Each area of business also requires a knowledgeable expert who can meet its specific, ever-changing needs. That's where the 47 specialist wholesale brokers featured on the following pages come into play.

Nominated by their agent partners and colleagues, these

individuals possess unique insights and highly developed skill sets tailored to their particular specialty, which they use to help retail agents and their clients secure the best coverage possible. By staying abreast of trending topics and changes in their areas of expertise, these brokers not only ensure agents and their clients are taken care of, but that each business is covered for future risks as well.



GLENN PETERSEN

Vice president

ALL RISKS

SPECIALTY: BUILDER'S RISK

Glenn Petersen's specialty in builder's risk was born out of his love for construction. "I have always had an interest in development, redevelopment, city planning and all of those subjects," he says. "Being a builder's risk specialist gives me a chance to see that development and feel like I'm participating."

Petersen has been acquiring knowledge in this area since he began his insurance career in 1989 as a loss control specialist and underwriter. His experience of inspecting thousands of businesses and speaking with countless business owners to learn which risk control techniques work best gives him significant credibility with underwriters, and he is diligent in his examination of construction budgets, analyzing the values and evaluating whether the terms indicated are adequate to complete projects.

"One of the biggest lessons I've learned during my career is that you can never be complacent," Petersen says. "There is always more to learn. You have to remain sharp and focused because that's what customers demand and deserve."

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TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020



DARRON S. JOHNSTON

Vice president

AMWINS BROKERAGE OF GEORGIA

SPECIALTY: PROPERTY AND INLAND MARINE

Darron Johnston joined AmWINS Group in 2013 and currently serves as a vice president in the AmWINS Brokerage

office in Atlanta and the leader of the firm's railroad practice group. Responsible for the production and marketing of all lines of property and inland marine business, Johnston specializes in the placement of large national property schedules, catastrophic portfolios, loss-distressed business and engineered risks.

Prior to joining AmWINS, Johnston worked for Aon Benfield as a property facultative broker, where he focused on increasing market capacity, CAT aggregate solutions and location carve-outs, as well as self-insured retention buy-downs for large technical and complex risks.

"I am humbled and immensely appreciative to be recognized by my colleagues," Johnston says of being named a Top Specialist Broker. "Any and all credit should be equally shared amongst our team. I am fortunate in that I have worked with many great individuals over the years and have too many to thank for helping me progress as a broker."



BRIAN C. LYNCH

Client executive

AMES & GOUGH INSURANCE/
RISK MANAGEMENT

SPECIALTY: ASSOCIATIONS AND NONPROFITS

The leader of the association and nonprofit division at Ames & Gough, Brian Lynch has long been interested in the insurance industry and began his career in 2009 by working for his father's agency, Paul Peters Agency, where he specialized in marine risks. From there, Lynch moved on to become vice president of property & casualty at Boston Insurance Brokerage. In 2016, he joined Ames & Gough, where he developed a new expertise and interest in serving the specialized needs of professional associations and nonprofits.

After more than a decade in the industry, Lynch finds the work a natural fit and enjoys the relationships he's built over the years. "One of the biggest lessons I've learned during my career is there's always something to learn," he says. "I enjoy the continuous learning about changes in the marketplace to remain up to date and strive to be a knowledgeable agent to service my clients' needs."



RENEE PAUL

Global account manager

PAUL HANSON PARTNERS SPECIALTY
INSURANCE

SPECIALTY: TRANSPORTATION

Renee Paul began working part-time in retail insurance at Paul Hanson Partners Specialty Insurance, a division of

Specialty Program Group, while still in high school. She continued remotely through college until graduating, then joined the agency full-time. Today, she's a global account manager, providing insurance products and consultative services for all segments of the transportation industry across the country.

Paul's biggest contribution to Paul Hanson Partners has been the development of the company's online technology marketplace, BizChoice Online. The platform provides a client-facing interface for everyone from individual truck drivers to executive management at large logistics companies and helps them manage all aspects of their business and operations, including contract carrier management onboarding, compliance, insurance procurement, risk mitigation, and integration with industry ELD and driver telematics. Paul also works as a liaison to various transportation industry associations for which Paul Hanson is the program administrator.



JERRY GILLIKIN

Executive vice president

HUB INTERNATIONAL

SPECIALTY: TRANSPORTATION

Jerry Gillikin was destined for the transportation business from the beginning, from his days spent loading trucks for Roadway Express to stay in shape for college football to his first job out of college in Roadway Express' management training program. Gillikin went on to become the regional sales manager for Transport Insurance Company and later stepped into a sales leadership role in Progressive's transportation division. Prior to joining Hub International, he was an owner of The Transportation Group Insurance Agency, which is now part of Hub.

Over the years, Gillikin has worked with many insurers and takes pride in his ability to explain the details of their unique programs. He attributes his continued success to his well-rounded background and understanding of his clients' businesses and needs, as well as having a reliable team to assist clients in various areas such as safety, compliance, claims and driver training.



CHRISTA NADLER

Executive vice president, property

RISK PLACEMENT SERVICES

SPECIALTY: TERRORISM

Christa Nadler began her career with Risk Placement Services [RPS] in 2006 as a broker associate and has since become a successful top-tier property broker. Her book of business has shown double-digit increases year over year for the last five years. In addition, Nadler serves as an area executive vice president in the Chicago office and manages the Chicago property team.

Nadler places terrorism coverage with US domestic markets and UK carriers, as well as stand-alone terrorism coverage on high-profile, high-target historical landmarks in Chicago. "Right now, terrorism and active shooter coverage are important coverages that are not well addressed in a general property form, and we're continuing to make sure that insureds are aware of the need for the cover," she says.

Nadler is also an integral part of her retail agents' presentations to their insureds, outlining exposures, the application of coverage and the differentiation of coverages provided between TRIPRA and terrorism.

TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020



ANDREW J. HARTMAN

Broker

CRC GROUP

SPECIALTY: TRANSPORTATION

Andrew Hartman began his insurance career in 2009 as an assistant account manager with Lockton in Houston. A year later, he was given the opportunity to join CRC Insurance as a wholesale broker and “has never looked back,” he says. “I learned how to broker business the old-fashioned way, through osmosis. I was negotiating and binding business on my own within just six months.”

As a wholesale broker specializing in the trucking industry, Hartman says he most enjoys the people he encounters. “I work with first- and second-generation immigrants, city folks, country folks and everyone in between,” he says. “There can be an inherent disconnect from the insureds you write because we don’t deal directly with the client, and finding ways to bridge that gap with our agents and build lasting relationships with both is a daily challenge we traverse successfully. It is one of the assets I offer in which I take great pride.”



JANET SMITH

President

BAILEY SPECIAL RISK

SPECIALTY: PROPERTY AND REAL ESTATE

Janet Smith’s insurance career began more than 25 years ago at a wholesale brokerage in Nashville. After four years there, she moved to help start another brokerage: Bailey Special Risk [BSR]. In 2009, Smith had the opportunity to

purchase BSR; as the current president, she continues to market the company’s products and services, educate clients and agents on coverage, assist in strategic risk placement, and work extensively with insurance carriers to keep BSR at the forefront of knowledge.

Recently, Smith and her staff secured a contract with the National Rural Water Association to be the sole provider to rural water utility districts and water systems in all 50 states, offering a data breach and cybersecurity program that’s structured to provide coverages for water utilities with unique exposures.



JOHN BUTLER

Senior vice president and environmental division practice leader

PROGRAM BROKERAGE CORPORATION

SPECIALTY: ENVIRONMENTAL

In his role as senior vice president and environmental division practice leader of Program Brokerage Corporation [PBC], John Butler works with a wide network of brokers to provide customized insurance solutions to help organizations that require protection against environmental risks while accommodating regulatory demands and lending requirements.

With more than four decades of insurance experience, including roles as an international loss adjuster and energy and specialty sector broker, Butler has been dedicated to environmental coverage for the last 25 years. His focus in this area began when he was placing programs to insure oil and specialty chemical companies against exposures to potentially catastrophic pollution liabilities. Recognizing the potential growth of what was at the time a new insurance segment, Butler transitioned to environmental insurance as a full-time specialty. He created PBC Environmental in 2002 and designed a unique wholesale resource that goes beyond typical policy placement to provide hands-on assistance to brokers and their insureds.

OUT-EXECUTE *verb*

Hustle.
Grind.
WIN.
Repeat.

AT RT SPECIALTY, IT'S WHAT WE DO.

Our wholesale specialty risk professionals have the expertise and tenacity to craft superior coverages for retail brokers' toughest risks, regardless of account size.

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AGRIBUSINESS AVIATION CASUALTY CONSTRUCTION ENERGY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTHCARE LIFE SCIENCES MARINE
PERSONAL LINES PROFESSIONAL & EXECUTIVE LIABILITY PROPERTY REAL ESTATE TRANSPORTATION WORKERS' COMPENSATION RT BINDING

TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020

**DAVID PALMER**

President, specialty property division
GENESEE GENERAL INSURANCE

SPECIALTY: PROPERTY

David Palmer began his insurance career in 1995 with Federated Insurance Company in Atlanta, initially as an

underwriter, then as a retail agent. Working in both roles helped Palmer fully understand the retail process, the daily challenges agents face and direct marketing – a foundation that proved helpful when he migrated to the E&S space in 2003.

In 2008, Palmer helped Roger Ware set up Genesee Special Brokerage. Their goal was to build a property brokerage platform in conjunction with the existing Genesee binding facility. At the time, Genesee primarily operated in Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee, and the establishment of Genesee Special Brokerage was a starting point for the company to expand outside its original territory.

“Every day is different and brings a new challenge,” Palmer says. “It’s gratifying to facilitate bringing parties together and finding solutions. The E&S marketplace is a true example of what happens when free markets are allowed to function, and I enjoy being a part of that.”

**CHRISTOPHER J. A.**

Senior vice president, casualty division

AMWINS BROKERAGE OF NEW JERSEY

SPECIALTY: PRODUCT LIABILITY

Christopher Pisani began his insurance career in 2001 with Crump of New Jersey, which became AmWINS Brokerage of New Jersey in 2003. “It’s a true honor and privilege to work for such a great firm like AmWINS,” he says. “Being part of the AmWINS family for 18 years now and watching the firm grow into a 150-year-old company has been amazing.”

With a focus on product liability – specifically children’s toys and the juvenile products manufacturing industry – Pisani and his team provide a tailored program for manufacturers of all sizes in these industries, both domestically and overseas. They also assist startups with insurance coverage to meet vendor requirements and look for ways to enhance coverage forms and stay ahead of industry trends.

“I enjoy the day-to-day interaction with both carrier partners and clients to provide tailored solutions for our insureds,” Pisani says. “The risk varies from client to client; therefore, it never gets monotonous. Ultimately, these experiences help to further my knowledge of the industry.”

**DARREN J. HICKEY**

Entertainment and sports specialty expert

HUB INTERNATIONAL

SPECIALTY: MOTORSPORTS

Darren Hickey has been in the insurance industry for more than 30 years. He joined Hub International in 2019 and, as an expert in the sports and entertainment arena, has developed one of the most diverse motorsports insurance practices in North America. His clients include teams, drivers, racing series, tracks, events and other companies involved in the sport, and his expertise extends into the areas of advanced manufacturing, hospitality and restaurant companies, event and mobile marketing companies, transportation and logistics, and more.

Throughout his career, Hickey has been featured in several media outlets, including *USA Today*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the Associated Press and Ken Ungar’s book *Ahead of the Game: What Every Athlete Needs to Know About Sports Business*. “The dynamic and ever-changing nature of the world of motorsports is what has drawn me to this specialty,” Hickey says. “It gives me the opportunity to continually learn and grow in order to always meet the needs of my clients.”

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TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020

**BARBARA WARN**

Senior vice president

PROGRAM BROKERAGE CORPORATION**SPECIALTY: CONSTRUCTION AND REAL ESTATE**

A member of Program Brokerage Corporation [PBC] since 2005, Barbara Warn is currently a senior vice president and wholesale producer with a concentration in the construction and real estate industries. With more than 17 years in the industry under her belt, Warn started her career in the marketing and finance

departments at Lucent Technologies and worked as a senior property underwriter at Crum & Forster before joining PBC.

During her time at PBC, Warn has been recognized every year with the highest honors at the company's annual awards ceremony for top North American performers. In 2006, she received the Rookie of the Year Award; since then, she has continued to be one of the highest-ranking new business producers each year, achieving the number-one spot for top new business commission production in the company several times.

**BRIAN THORNTON**

CEO

PROWRITERS**SPECIALTY: CYBER INSURANCE**

Brian Thornton is CEO of ProWriters, an MGA and wholesale brokerage that underwrites and places cyber, E&O and D&O insurance and serves brokers and independent insurance agents across the nation. Thornton has more than 20 years of specialty insurance experience in claims, underwriting and leadership roles; he began his career at AIG, focusing on specialty lines.

"I never looked back," he says. "The fact that I started in specialty lines claims gave me the right foundation to build on – specifically, understating the mechanics of the policy and how it worked in the event of a claim."

After AIG, Thornton worked at Chubb before moving to Hiscox to launch its US technology E&O and cyber practice and serve as the regional executive for Chicago and Los Angeles. He joined ProWriters in 2013.

"Cyber was a very small exposure for many years, but now it is one of the largest exposures for all businesses," Thornton says. "It has been fascinating to see the product and industry change and grow."

**GEORGE RAMIREZ**

Broker

HULL & COMPANY**SPECIALTY: TECHNOLOGY**

As a professional liability broker at Hull & Company, George Ramirez focuses on technology and has grown his book exponentially since entering the industry after graduating from Loyola University in 2014. He came to Hull & Company from ECC Insurance Brokers, where he worked as an associate account manager in financial services and an associate broker.

In his current position, Ramirez brings what one colleague describes as "large-scale knowledge and resources to small to mid-sized retail shops, allowing them to succeed in writing the business 'alpha' shops used to dominate." Ramirez has negotiated several exclusive rates and coverage offerings to ensure Hull & Company puts forward the best available coverage. In 2018, he was named Wholesale Rookie of the Year by Brown & Brown, as well as the Hull Tampa Bay Top Gun.



PAUL GAGLIOTI III

Founder and CEO

HARBOR.AI

SPECIALTY: E&S CASUALTY

An expert in the excess & surplus lines space, Paul Gaglioti is the founder and CEO of Harbor.ai, a fully licensed E&S brokerage, MGA and full-service

specialty brokerage powered by the company's proprietary Harbor.ai artificial intelligence platform, which was developed by co-founder and CTO Marc Hadfield. The platform has enabled Harbor.ai to streamline some of the most complicated specialty insurance transactions by using machine learning to create prediction and recommendation models, logic and inference to understand the needs of the insured, and relevant data to determine if insurance carrier appetite is met via the underwriting process.

Gaglioti is a Certified Insurance Counselor and was recognized by IBA as a Top Producer in 2017 and 2018. He serves as a director at large for Big I New York and is a licensed agent and broker in the areas of property, casualty, life, accident, health, surplus lines, title and long-term care.



MICHAEL WOOD

Executive vice president

AMWINS BROKERAGE OF NEW JERSEY

SPECIALTY: CAT-EXPOSED PROPERTY

As a wholesale property broker, Michael Wood works primarily on catastrophic-exposed real estate accounts that aren't a fit for the standard market. Over the last 12 years, Wood and his team have focused on placing accounts with some of the most difficult

exposures to Tier 1 wind and California earthquakes.

Bringing expertise and capacity to AmWINS' retail brokers, Wood and his team help to secure more favorable terms by capitalizing on the use of data and analytics, negotiating rate matrices with agreed addition and deletion rates with carriers, and putting together manuscript policy forms with real-estate-specific policy language and endorsements that address exposures unique to the industry while also ensuring terms and conditions are compliant with lender requirements. Together, these efforts ultimately reduce costs and improve coverage.



CHELSEA BERGEN

Area assistant vice president

RISK PLACEMENT SERVICES

SPECIALTY: INLAND MARINE

Chelsea Bergen spent 10 years on the underwriting side of inland marine coverage, so she brings a wealth of knowledge to the specialty as a broker. In her three years with Risk Placement Services [RPS], Bergen has helped to grow the RPS Chicago inland marine book from virtually nothing to more than \$10 million. Her brokers trust her to secure the most competitive products and coverages for their clients, and Bergen isn't shy about putting together coverage comparisons, getting on the phone to speak with insureds about their exposures and going through forms line by line to ensure the correct coverage.

"I love working with our underwriters," she says. "The inland marine line of business can include hundreds of different types of business operations and covered property, and our underwriters make it possible for us to be successful and deliver the coverage that our clients need."

TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020



CLEODA MAYWEATHER III

Senior underwriter

PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM INSURANCE
BROKERAGE

SPECIALTY: TRANSPORTATION

Cleoda (Clay) Mayweather III has been the senior underwriter on the cannabis team at Professional Program Insurance Brokerage [PPIB] since 2013, coming to the company after working in the wholesale business. Working with carriers and the underwriting staff, Mayweather develops applications, quote templates and unique policy forms, and is regularly asked by retail brokers to provide tips on how to work with cannabis businesses.

Due to his rapport with brokers and carriers, Mayweather has helped to turn the cannabis program into PPIB's fastest-growing business and also has an excellent quote-to-bind ratio. As PPIB expands its cannabis program into more of a wholesale model, Mayweather is playing an instrumental role in developing more options for brokers.



KEN C. BURRELL

Managing partner

SYNAPSE SERVICES

SPECIALTY: ENVIRONMENTAL

Ken Burrell has more than 22 years of experience in the environmental insurance and consulting industries. Prior to joining Synapse Services in 2008, Burrell served as the executive vice president and head of the corporate accounts division of AIG Environmental, a business worth \$700 million in premium volume. He joined Synapse as a managing partner and specialty environmental broker and currently leads the Southeast region, collaborating with his partners to manage the strategic expansion of the business's brokerage platform while maintaining its commitment to providing highly technical and specialized brokerage services. Burrell is often consulted by specialty environmental carriers as they prepare to roll out new coverage forms.

Before entering the insurance field, Burrell worked as an environmental geologist and project manager with an engineering firm. "I've always had an interest in both the environment and in business," he says, "and this field provides me the perfect opportunity to use my experience and education to solve complex problems for my clients."



DAVID DELORENZO

Owner and CEO

AMBASSADOR GROUP/BAR AND
RESTAURANT INSURANCE

SPECIALTY: HOSPITALITY

David DeLorenzo's path to the insurance industry was more winding than straight. While interning at Warner Bros. Records during college, he fell in love with the entertainment industry and decided to make it his future. However, due to the tough marketplace at the time, he found himself instead working at his father's agency, Ambassador Group Insurance, after graduation.

Right away, DeLorenzo embraced the bar and nightclub business, learning all the nuances about the type of protection these businesses need. Once he had gathered the required knowledge and experience in that field, he created a subsidiary of the Ambassador Group: Bar and Restaurant Insurance.

Today, 20 years later, DeLorenzo's team takes part in associations and committees in the hospitality industry, promoting "great service and strong, positive relationships ... Knowing your client's business practice, strengths and weaknesses is base-level effort," he says. "Go the extra mile to design a service that covers all of their needs while making them feel like a real person, and you will never be seen as just another commodity."



ALBERT PETERSON

Broker, professional lines

BURNS & WILCOX

SPECIALTY: PROFESSIONAL LINES

Albert Peterson began his career as an underwriter trainee at Burns & Wilcox in Minneapolis, servicing a substantial commercial book and quickly learning the ropes. The position gave him

exposure to a wide range of products and ultimately drove him to pursue a career in professional lines.

Peterson continues to deepen his expertise by learning about new risks and trends in the industry and helping clients identify new areas for growth.

"I love the challenge that comes with staying on top of emerging trends, uncovering new markets and gaining

in-depth knowledge about the field," he says. "I appreciate being able to focus on specific industries and craft policies to address client needs."

Peterson currently serves as a trend advisor for PLUS, focusing on healthcare and medical trends, and was recently nominated to the 2020 Future PLUS Committee, which looks to engage professionals under 35.

TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020

**MIKE W. SMITH**

President and CEO

AXIS INSURANCE SERVICES AND PL RISK ADVISORS**SPECIALTIES: FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS, INSURANCE BROKERS, COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE, MANAGED CARE ORGANIZATIONS**

Mike Smith founded Axis Insurance Services in 1999 and PL Risk Advisors 15 years later. Today, he serves as president of both companies, which specialize in providing insurance solutions for financial institutions, insurance brokers, commercial real estate and large managed care organizations. In Smith's 20-year tenure managing the companies, they have achieved a growth rate of more than 20% per year, approximately \$40 million in annual sales and have expanded operations to all 50 states.

A former practicing CPA with Coopers & Lybrand and audit manager for many of the country's largest insurance companies and financial institutions, Smith's career path also included stints as a COO and CFO of a regional HMO. "I needed to find a career that would allow me to utilize my analytical skills as a former CPA to help companies that need something beyond a commodity broker," he says. "I have been able to find a niche that affords me that opportunity."

**HUNTER PATTEN**

Assistant vice president

ALL RISKS**SPECIALTY: ZIP-LINE AND CHALLENGE COURSE CONSTRUCTION****CHAD HALL**

President

RT SPECIALTY – TAMPA**SPECIALTY: CONSTRUCTION**

As a practice leader for RT Specialty's construction practice and president of RT Specialty in Tampa, Chad Hall has developed a team that focuses exclusively on construction-related placements. Throughout his career, Hall has successfully structured casualty insurance for more than 2,000 projects, ranging from residential to infrastructure and energy, and he drives more than \$250 million in premium annually.

"I have always loved construction and grew up around the industry," he says. "I worked in the field during high school and college, eventually getting my master's degree in construction management. So it was natural that I would stay focused on this passion in my insurance career."

In 2019, Hall and teammate Erik Davis were awarded the RT Specialty Construction Broker of the Year Award, which they've received several times over the years. "The biggest lesson I learned early on is to focus on consulting versus selling," Hall says. "All options need to be considered and weighed."



As a casualty broker, Hunter Patten is regularly asked to find coverage for hard-to-place risks – and when these risks involve people suspended from a cable more than 30 feet in the air while soaring at speeds of up to 100 miles per hour, finding insurance is even more difficult.

Patten was introduced to challenge course and zip-line construction five years ago when his retail agent partner was unable to find coverage for a client. Since then, Patten has gained expert knowledge of the placement and claims challenges faced by course builders and has developed proprietary programs with two carrier partners.

Whether taking on international projects or working in tough construction venues, Patten is constantly adapting to the challenges his clients face and evaluating policy forms to ensure they're evolving with the complex nature of litigation. "During my career, I've learned that integrity is everything," he says. "Delivering on one's word is a bare minimum, and good communication is imperative, especially when there may be difficult news to deliver."



DONALD DRESBACK

Executive vice president and co-founder

THE BEACON GROUP

SPECIALTY: PUBLIC ENTITIES

Donald Dresback started his career as a commercial underwriter and supervisor with Nationwide and Maryland

Casualty (now part of Zurich). After relocating from Annapolis to Boca Raton with his family, he entered the broker side of the business. His first clients at Beacon Group were public entities, specifically government agencies and school districts.

"Every day brings new and exciting challenges," Dresback says. "School districts in Florida have ever-changing special needs from a risk management and insurance standpoint, including cyber, sovereign immunity, hurricanes, Stafford Act/FEMA, active shooter, NFIP, student and athletic injuries, and the insurance marketplace exposures."

A regular speaker at conferences for PRIMA and the CPCU Society, Dresback is also the author of two chapters of the *Florida Contractor's Manual*, served on the Insurance Institute ARM exam-writing and curriculum committee for more than 10 years, and was involved with the national CPCU Society for over 25 years. He is currently on the Florida Independent Agents' legislative committee and is chair of the St. Thomas University president's board of advisors.

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TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020



WILLIAM G. FLEISCHER

President

BERNARD FLEISCHER AND SONS

SPECIALTY: FINE ART

"My goal is to help my clients in getting what they require for their art insurance, but also teaching them about their art policies," says William Fleischer, referencing a quote by Leonardo da Vinci as inspiration: "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."

A broker for more than 40 years, Fleischer believes it's of the utmost importance for his clients to understand what they're purchasing, and he takes the time to make that happen. He originally got his start in insurance because of his father, but he soon realized his motivation stemmed from getting to share his knowledge while assisting clients and building relationships.

Fueled by his lifelong love for the arts, Fleischer has worked with every discipline in the field, from collectors to galleries to artists. "Being able to help and guide a client is very fulfilling, especially during times of crisis or dealing with purchasing or preventative solutions for the future," he says.

LAWANA HARRIS

Broker

HULL & COMPANY

SPECIALTY: COMMERCIAL PROPERTY & CASUALTY

Since beginning her career in the insurance industry as an executive assistant at Home Insurance Company in 1986, Lawana Harris has worked as an underwriter assistant, associate broker and broker, and has been in her current position at Hull & Company since 2015. Especially skilled in commercial property & casualty insurance, Harris joined the

\$500K Club at Hull & Company in 2018. As a hybrid broker, she places small to large P&C accounts, working with 11 in-house binding markets to underwrite small accounts and multiple brokerage markets to place larger accounts.

"I've established relationships with retail agents located in several states to generate new business leads, and my book includes hospitality, motels and hotels, contractors, and HOA risks," Harris says. She built a book worth \$460,000 in revenue in three years and has received several internal awards, including Silver and Bronze Production Awards and Top Gun for the office.



CHRISTOPHER MOULDER

Senior vice president

WORLDWIDE FACILITIES

SPECIALTY: TRANSPORTATION

Growing up in a family of blue-collar auto workers, Christopher Moulder has always had a passion for "all things on wheels." He began his career in transportation claims with a national specialty insurer and eventually moved into underwriting and risk management. When an opportunity came up to partner with a former client on the wholesale brokerage side of the business, Moulder took the leap.

At Worldwide Facilities, Moulder and his

transportation teammates write "anything with wheels" and have developed a niche for emerging risks in the autonomous driving and new mobility segment. Over the years, Moulder has built relationships with key specialty markets to provide solutions to this segment and assists in the placement of dozens of accounts around the world.

"I wish I could say that I have won every deal that I wanted to win," he says. "Unfortunately, I haven't. Whenever failure presents itself, I try to understand the reason for the failure and intently learn from it. Every account is a learning opportunity, win or lose."



CRAIG DUNN

Executive vice president
AMWINS BROKERAGE OF TEXAS

SPECIALTY: FINANCIAL LINES AND CYBER

Craig Dunn joined AmWINS in 2005 after spending five years as a financial analyst for a boutique venture capital firm. In his current role, Dunn serves as the Texas region leader of AmWINS and leads the professional lines and cyber team. Additionally, Dunn serves

on the AmWINS Brokerage advisory board and is the managing director of AmWINS' professional lines national practice group. He is also on the Southeast Division board for the Insurance Industry Charitable Foundation.

"My financial analyst background translates well to evaluating exposures and addressing coverage issues," Dunn says of his attraction to this specialty. "I enjoy the fact that we have the ability to help agents provide a solution and write new accounts in an area of insurance beyond their area of expertise."



WES BAKER

Vice president
ALL RISKS

SPECIALTY: OCEAN CARGO/ STOCK THROUGHPUT

As a Florida-based broker living near several import and export

businesses, Wes Baker found an ocean cargo/stock throughput specialty to be a natural fit. He was first introduced to the specialty in 2012, a year after joining All Risks, and quickly realized how little understanding there was of the product. Baker made it a priority to become a subject-matter expert and, in turn, a better resource for his clients and colleagues.

Before he submits a new risk to his underwriters, Baker does all of the upfront underwriting and rating himself. He stays in constant communication with brokers and carrier underwriters to learn which classes of business are taking losses and why – all part of his mission to provide the best customer experience and coverage possible.

"I enjoy learning how businesses operate," he says, "and with ocean cargo insurance, I get to see behind the curtain and really understand all of the logistics and operations that make up the foundation of the company."



KAREN J. IZZO

Executive vice president
IZZO INSURANCE SERVICES, A DIVISION OF HULL & COMPANY

SPECIALTY: SECURITY GUARDS

Since founding Izzo Insurance Services in 1980, Karen Izzo has worked as a wholesale broker to continuously provide insurance solutions for security guard companies in all 50 states. Izzo has multiple exclusive security guard workers' compensation markets with carriers who trust her expertise in underwriting this class and has written numerous articles for security trade publications, in addition to speaking at security association events.

The security industry has evolved considerably over the years, and Izzo enjoys educating retail brokers about the ever-changing exposures. "I'm proud that brokers trust in our expertise and consider our agency an asset in helping them write and maintain security guard accounts, as well as monoline workers' compensation accounts," she says. "Serving our brokers by providing insight in exposures associated with this class enables them to provide the best coverage at the most effective rates for their clients."

TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020



RICHARD L. FLANAGAN II

Managing director and president of RT Specialty – Orange County

RT SPECIALTY

SPECIALTY: CONSTRUCTION AND REAL ESTATE

The creator and leader of RT Specialty's national builder's risk practice group, Richard L. Flanagan II previously served as regional property director for CRC Insurance Services and was an account executive at Aon Re Services in Chicago. Specializing in construction and real estate accounts, Flanagan's team delivers customized products for retailers nationwide. He has led CRC's property division on the West Coast since 2005 and, throughout his career, has created multiple exclusive proprietary builder's risk products.

"I believe a hands-on, personal approach is vitally important to creating lasting relationships," Flanagan says. "From a wholesale perspective, I believe the space was underserved 18 years ago when I really began to focus on the construction vertical. During that time, it has become a huge source of business for RT Property nationwide. It's truly an honor to be considered to be one of the top in this space, [and] the credit really must go to the fantastic team I work with."



KRISTOPHER BAUER

President

WHOLESALE TRADING INSURANCE SERVICES

SPECIALTY: CONSTRUCTION

Kristopher Bauer has been president of Wholesale Trading Insurance Services [WTIS] since March 2016 after serving as chief

operating officer of WTIS/WTCL, which he grew from a startup in 2010 to where it stands today as a premier transactional wholesale brokerage within the JenCap Holdings group of companies.

Throughout his 25-year career, Bauer has established himself as both a production and business leader, providing solutions for customers' complex risks, as well as internal business challenges. "One of the biggest lessons I've learned in my career is that patience, empathy and respect for those you trade with can breed success if truly understood and practiced," he says.

Bauer specializes in the construction sector, placing practice, project and owner-controlled insurance program [OCIP] policies across the US. Prior to WTIS, he was an executive vice president at AmWINS Group, where he also served as national casualty practice leader and national construction practice leader. He has been on the executive committee of the California Surplus Lines Association and numerous carrier advisory panels and is active in various local charities.



AARON DICAPRIO

CEO and co-founder

RENT RESCUE

SPECIALTY: RENTAL PROPERTIES

Aaron DiCaprio is the co-founder of Rent Rescue, which provides rent default insurance that reimburses residential property owners for up to six months and repays certain legal expenses associated with defaults. Prior to leading Rent Rescue, DiCaprio was an insurance defense litigator and held senior positions with various insurance organizations.

"I think the best business ideas spring from personal experience," DiCaprio says. "My wife and I bought a house in Denver and had every intention of settling down, but circumstances forced us to relocate across the country. We hired a property manager and entered into a lease with a qualified tenant – or so we thought." Five months later, the rent wasn't paid; the tenant had lost his job and was moving. That's when Rent Rescue began to take shape.

"I like being a problem-solver for my clients," DiCaprio says. "Their issues are never black and white, and I've found that the most successful professionals are those who ask questions and can navigate the gray."



NINA VELLUCCI

Vice president, South region

PMC INSURANCE GROUP

SPECIALTY: WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Nina Vellucci has been in the insurance industry for more than 10 years and is currently the vice president of the South region at PMC Insurance Group. Having worked in both carrier and retail settings, Vellucci has an in-depth understanding of what each side needs in a wholesale brokerage atmosphere; as a workers' compensation specialist, she prides herself on providing underwriting expertise and creative solutions to PMC's retail agent partners.

"What I enjoy most about being a wholesale broker is building relationships with our retail agents and carrier partners, not only professionally but also personally," Vellucci says. "With the broad array of industries we see every day, it allows me to always be working on new problems to solve. This could be a multi-state or foreign coverage need, high-debit-mod account, or even just talking an agent through the workers' comp classification code of a tough exposure. These are all intricacies of the work comp product that I feel sometimes get taken for granted."



JOEL BISSING

Area senior vice president

RISK PLACEMENT SERVICES

SPECIALTY: EQUIPMENT BREAKDOWN

As an equipment breakdown coverage expert with more than 30 years of experience, Joel Bissing has been with Risk Placement Services [RPS] since 2006 and has worked with carriers on policy wordings, application of coverage and claims settlements. Presently, Bissing is the single largest wholesale producer of equipment breakdown coverage for RPS and is considered a top-tier producer for

his key insurance carriers.

Bissing was instrumental in helping create the Arthur J. Gallagher/RPS Advantage Equipment Breakdown Coverage Program, consisting of a panel of five A.M. Best-rated equipment breakdown insurance carriers that provide competitive rates, deductibles, sublimits, extensions of coverage, and broad policy terms and conditions. Since its inception in 2017, the program has grown approximately 44%. In addition to his brokerage duties, Bissing supports the RPS intern program and has been training an associate broker hired out of the program with an eye toward increasing sales production for his team.

TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020



VIVIANE KRIEF-WOODCOCK

President, workers' compensation practice

RT SPECIALTY

SPECIALTY: WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Viviane Krief-Woodcock currently serves as president of RT Specialty's workers' compensation division, relying on her experience as a leader in the insurance industry and providing notable advice and extraordinary service. Krief-Woodcock is responsible for the development and growth of RT Specialty's workers' compensation platform, which has placed more than \$400 million in written premium to date. Additionally, she has built extensive partnerships with numerous top-rated carriers, providing an array of solutions that address the challenges facing this market.

Prior to joining RT Specialty, Krief-Woodcock was a director in the workers' compensation division of International Facilities Insurance Services, which was acquired by RT Specialty in 2013. Before that, she spent 10 years underwriting property & casualty risks for Chubb. Her expertise in underwriting marine and energy-related accounts has helped foster a strong underwriting background for large and complex accounts, and throughout her career, Krief-Woodcock has been a role model, change agent and advocate for the industry.



RAFFI KODIKIAN

Vice president and LPL practice leader

FOUNDERS PROFESSIONAL

SPECIALTY: LAWYERS' PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY

Raffi Kodikian began his insurance career in 2004, starting as an administrative assistant and office manager for a professional liability wholesale brokerage. Soon he was broking his own accounts, with a focus on lawyers' professional liability. Before long, LPL became the cornerstone of Kodikian's book, and since that time, he has placed coverage for firms of all sizes and areas of practice while expanding his focus to include employment practices liability and cyber liability for law firms.

In 2017, Kodikian joined Founders Professional as an LPL practice leader, helping the brokerage expand into the Western US and become a national wholesale operation. "I feel very lucky to have found this industry and the role I play in it," he says. "I strive every day to do right by my clients and be an excellent partner to my carriers, well aware that if I don't bring my A game to either relationship, the other will suffer as a result."



CHRISTINE PALERMO

Marine underwriter

WORLDWIDE FACILITIES

SPECIALTY: MARINE

For the last five years, Christine Palermo has worked for Worldwide Facilities as a marine underwriter and broker. She started her career at Crump Insurance Services, where she worked for 16 years, beginning at the bottom and swiftly working her way up to underwriter and broker. During her time with Crump, Palermo focused on marine risks, specifically in the areas of cargo and marine liabilities, and she now specializes in ocean cargo and stock throughput risks – all of which often cross over into the energy arena.

Initially, Palermo entered marine insurance because it was required of her. She remained in it, however, because of all the different types of risks it presents. "The products insured involve a wide variety, from A to Z," she says. "Each opportunity presents a new dynamic for customizing the needs of the client. What I enjoy most in this field of work is the constant chase and challenge of working with each agent."



RUSTY HUGHES

President, Birmingham professional liability

CRC GROUP

SPECIALTY: PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY

Rusty Hughes joined CRC Group in 1999 after spending two years as an underwriting trainee for the Vesta Insurance Group. A 22-year insurance veteran focused on professional lines and healthcare-related business, Hughes has notable expertise in the senior living industry; since joining CRC, he has been an integral part of the company's growth in healthcare.

Throughout his career, Hughes has held positions ranging from broker assistant to now being responsible for the professional liability practice in Birmingham, Alabama. During his time with CRC, he has helped create many in-house programs, including two London facilities, and is an active mentor to young brokers. "I enjoy helping them navigate the insurance business," he says.



CHRISTIAAN DURDALLER

Executive vice president

INSURETRUST

SPECIALTY: CYBER AND TECHNOLOGY

As the executive vice president of INSUREtrust, Christiaan Durdaller leads the corporate solutions brokering team with a specific focus on INSUREtrust's national cyber and technology clients. "While cyber is a financial lines coverage, it takes more than a financial lines generalist to craft cyber coverage language appropriately, and I think brokers are finally realizing this as claims frequency has increased at a substantial rate over the last two years," Durdaller says of his specialty. "In 2012, I saw it as an opportunity, and I haven't looked back since."

Durdaller uses his position in INSUREtrust's leadership team to help ensure the company's products, services and solutions stay ahead of the market and competition, while also dealing with the teams' strategic partnerships and lead production. In both 2017 and 2019, Durdaller's team was recognized internationally by Advisen and industry peers as Cyber Brokering Team of the Year; in 2018, Durdaller was named US Cyber Risk Industry Person of the Year by Advisen.



LYNN COGGER KOOP

Executive vice president and shared economy practice leader

RT SPECIALTY

SPECIALTY: TRANSPORTATION

Lynn Cogger Koop joined RT Specialty in 2010 and is responsible for building the company's transportation and workers' compensation practice, with a primary focus on underwriting all classes of livery, trucking, business auto and garage. Prior to RT Specialty, Koop worked at CRC Insurance Services, where she developed a large transportation-focused book. She began her insurance career in 1988 in the underwriting department at Harco National Insurance Company, where she received extensive training on the truck dealership and long-haul trucking classes.

Today, Koop's specialty knowledge in this area includes car sharing and app-based coverages, hired and non-owned auto insurance, distressed or unique auto, trucking, excess auto, ambulances and non-emergency medical transportation, workers' compensation, and the Defense Base Act.

"Ninety percent of broking is following up," Koop says. "Making those personal connections and follow-up are key to our success. I began my career as a truck underwriter and had incredible mentors and have built a solid team in this interesting line of business."

TOP SPECIALIST BROKERS 2020

**ZACH BURDINE**

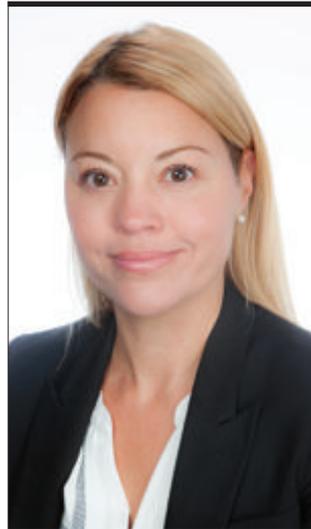
Energy practice leader

RISK PLACEMENT SERVICES**SPECIALTY: ENERGY**

Zach Burdine has spent the last decade underwriting and brokering complex energy accounts. His expertise stretches from tailoring specific programs for large midstream companies to placing high-limit capacity with brokerage trading partners. At Risk Placement Services [RPS], Burdine has created exclusive energy products and publishes a quarterly 'state of the market' energy report for his customers.

To build a foundation for his career, Burdine attended and completed PETEX's Fundamentals in Petroleum and Rig School. In 2018, he earned an executive MBA in energy from the University of Oklahoma. In recent years, he has been invited to speak at various conferences about the state of the energy market.

In addition to his responsibilities as a producer, Burdine devotes his time to mentoring other producers in the energy practice group. "I'm humbled to be included on the Top Specialist Brokers list," he says. "Any credit should be given to the team around me and to RPS for putting us in a position to grow and flourish."

**DEBORAH
DIOGUARDI**

Vice president

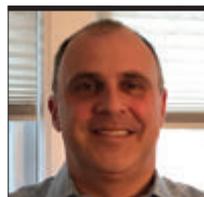
NIF GROUP**SPECIALTY: PROFESSIONAL
LIABILITY**

Deborah Dioguardi has been in the insurance industry since 1998, when she began as a claims representative for GEICO. She joined the NIF Pro division of NIF Group, a JenCap Holdings Company, in 1999 as an assistant; by 2001, she was

handling professional liability books of business and managing the employment practices liability insurance book.

Currently, Dioguardi serves as a vice president of NIF Group and manager of NIF Pro. Her responsibilities include developing new business, placing and servicing accounts, and establishing and maintaining relationships with insurance companies. She is a specialist in management liability, professional liability and cyber liability insurance and has been instrumental in tailoring coverages and programs to address her agents' and brokers' various niches.

"I did not plan to have a career in insurance but was fortunate enough to find a career that I continue to be passionate about," Dioguardi says. "I have also been lucky enough to be part of the wholesale community, which consists of some of the most intelligent, hard-working and successful people I know."

**MATT ROMANO**

Vice president, flood

MONARCH E&S INSURANCE SERVICES**SPECIALTY: FLOOD**

Matt Romano has become an expert in flood insurance by taking the time to continually study all of its technical aspects. Romano started in the field as a flood consultant, working with real estate companies to help them and their brokers understand the flood risk associated with their properties. He then worked as a wholesale broker before realizing he could be more effective in helping retailers place coverage for their insureds in an ever-changing flood marketplace. "Flood insurance is a specialty in which there has traditionally not been much expertise," Romano explains. "I saw a real need."

By taking the time to speak with retail agents, Romano can truly understand each client's needs, allowing him to structure the most comprehensive and cost-effective flood program available.



ROBERT HOLMES

President

SPECTRUM WEATHER AND SPECIALTY INSURANCE

SPECIALTY: WEATHER

Robert Holmes began his career as a meteorologist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Space Science and Engineering Center, studying the weather of Antarctica. During his time there, he earned awards from the National Science Foundation and the US Navy and, in 1999, had an Antarctic geographical feature, Holmes Ridge, named in his honor by the United States Geological Survey.

After 10 years, Holmes left academia and joined a hedge-fund-owned weather derivatives trading business. In 2008, he created a weather insurance agency designed to facilitate the sale of weather-based policies. Three years later, he founded his own brokerage, Spectrum Weather and Specialty Insurance.

Since its inception, Spectrum has been all about customer service and creating innovative solutions to the issues that plague those with financial exposure to weather. "Leveraging my background as a meteorologist, along with my interpersonal relationship skills, I knew that the insureds in this market could be better served," Holmes says. 



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AGENCY INSIGHT

The apprentice

Meredith Messenger, VP of operations at Peter M. Bakker Agency, tells *IBA* about pioneering an agency apprenticeship program that's the first of its kind in Connecticut

IBA: Tell us about Peter M. Bakker Agency's new apprenticeship program.

Meredith Messenger: The Peter M. Bakker Agency was recently awarded the first insurance agency apprenticeship by the Connecticut Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship Training. We're working with the state and with Goodwin College, a private college in East Hartford, Connecticut, to identify where there are opportunities to partner and to really expose students to what the independent agency channel has to offer.

This is something I've been passionate about for a very long time. It's my aim to connect groups of people who want and deserve meaningful employment with groups of insurance agents who desperately need talent coming into the industry.

IBA: What makes your apprenticeship program so unique?

MM: The apprenticeship program is unique in that it's the first program I know of in Connecticut that's geared more toward feeding talent into small-business independent agencies, rather than into the carrier side or the more corporate side of the business. In that respect, the program at Goodwin College is unique and special, and it can make a really big difference to the local community and to this part of our industry.

IBA: Why do you think young people don't want to join the independent agency channel?

MM: I think there's a perception issue. I think the independent agency channel, in general, offers some really great opportunities for millennials. Millennials are entrepreneurial, they're looking to make a difference in their communities, and they want to make sure their voices are heard – and small business is great for all of those things.

That being said, I think there are a lot of small and mid-size insurance agencies that haven't adapted to the new world of work yet and don't really understand what the next generation of the workforce is looking for. Independent agents and brokers have to really work on building a culture and an environment that's conducive to the new working requirements. The businesses that can build that culture are going to be very successful,

because the next generation is very loyal, and they're very committed to causes that they're invested in. I think there's a tremendous opportunity for future generations in the independent agency channel.

IBA: Why is it important for states to support agency apprenticeship programs like this?

MM: I think it's one of the only ways a program like this will really take off. The role the states need to play is dual. They have to help build the programs and place the students, but they also have to spend time with the agency principals and business owners to help them support and retain the talent they source through the programs.

Not many small-business owners and agency principals have a business background. Many grew up as producers and got into leadership through being excellent salespeople.

ABOUT THE PETER M. BAKKER AGENCY



The Peter M. Bakker Agency is an independent property & casualty insurance agency that has been serving the Connecticut area for more than 40 years. The second-generation agency offers a wide spectrum of personal and commercial insurance products, in addition to life and health insurance and financial planning services. The original owner sold the agency to Renaissance Alliance Insurance Services in 2017, turning it into the Connecticut-based hub for the independent agency alliance.



“Millennials are entrepreneurial, they’re looking to make a difference in their communities, and they want to make sure their voices are heard – and [independent agencies] are great for all of those things”

Meredith Messenger (front row, center) and the team at Peter M. Bakker Agency

They don’t necessarily have the perspective needed to build a program that retains talent like this – and it’s a little bit scary to them because they’re investing money in the program, and if that apprentice were to leave, they’re going to feel like they lost that money. So I think the state needs to support the implementation of the program once the apprentice is placed.

IBA: Peter M. Bakker Agency is a member of Renaissance Alliance Insurance Services. How will this program impact that network?

MM: This apprenticeship program is for the Peter M. Bakker Agency, but it’s also for the wider Renaissance Alliance membership. Our goal is to get enough people through the program who will gain solid insurance agency

WHAT THE AGENCY’S APPRENTICES CAN EXPECT

Apprentices at the Peter M. Bakker Agency will complete a year-long structured program in which they will rotate among several operational units to gain full-spectrum training in how insurance and insurance agencies work. The operational units include:



Reception work



Personal lines service



Commercial lines service



Outside sales



Inside sales



Business economics

experience so we can start to feed talent into the Renaissance Alliance member agencies.

We’re very excited and very proud of this apprenticeship program. I think if we can continue to improve it, the program can have a big impact on Renaissance Alliance and the

value the network offers.

It’s even more exciting to look at it from a big-picture perspective in terms of what this program can bring to the wider community and the impact it can have on society and the local economy. **IB**

SECTOR FOCUS: CANNABIS

High hopes for 2020

Leaders in the booming cannabis insurance market share their insights on the current landscape and what's to come

IN 2019, Hawaii and Illinois became the latest states to give the green light to medical and/or recreational cannabis – and talk has been swirling in Arizona, Florida, Arkansas, Missouri, New Jersey and South Dakota about possible changes to legislation in 2020. With more states ‘going green,’ the cannabis

market compared to this time last year.

“The expectation that you don’t have general liability, or as a cannabis operator that you can’t find basic insurance, is a misnomer,” he says. “It readily exists these days.”

Susan Preston, president of Professional Program Insurance Brokerage [PPIB],



“On a scale of one to 10 as an industry, when it comes to meeting the needs of insureds, we’re sitting somewhere around five or six”

Charles Pyfrom, CannGen

insurance market is growing, both in players and insurance capacity – but there’s still a long way to go.

“On a scale of one to 10 as an industry, when it comes to meeting the needs of insureds, we’re sitting somewhere around five or six,” says Charles Pyfrom, chief marketing officer at CannGen. General liability insurance for cannabis operators is now available from a handful of markets, and according to Pyfrom, that’s a huge improve-

ment compared to this time last year. agrees that more insurance companies are tiptoeing into the market and writing cannabis coverage, especially for larger clients, so competition is increasing.

“While there are more companies in the market,” she says, “many are taking small pieces of the market, with existing companies getting fussier on what part of the market they want.”

Larger operations have historically had challenges sourcing sufficient coverage,

but that’s not necessarily the case anymore, Pyfrom says. “From general liability, product liability and crop coverage to workers’ comp and auto, CannGen offers many of these coverages.”

Ongoing coverage challenges

Even though traditional business insurance lines are now more accessible to buyers in the cannabis industry, it can still sometimes be challenging to find everything they need in one place.

“While there are more companies in the market, cannabis businesses often have to piece their insurance program together from different sources,” Preston says. Another important thing to remember, she adds, is that product liability is almost never included with general liability, so agents who get a general liability quote likely need to request product liability separately.

When it comes to more specific coverage for cannabis-related risks, that’s a different story. Coverage for on-site consumption, which would be similar to liquor liability, isn’t easily available.

“Even though more states are allowing this, the insurance market has been hesitant to offer this coverage,” Preston says. It’s also challenging to find coverage for things like transportation of live crops, finished stock and cash, especially for higher-limit policies.

Outdoor crop insurance is another risk that’s yet to be addressed by most insurers. “We’ve heard some markets that are offering very bespoke coverage needs in that circumstance,” Pyfrom says, “but despite our presence in the marketplace, when we talk to our retail and wholesale distribution partners, that question comes up all the time.”

Yet the need for coverage is clear. Last August, hemp growers in central Oregon lost millions of dollars after their cannabis plants were destroyed by a gigantic hailstorm, pushing them to the edge of bankruptcy. “Addressing these needs may require oppor-



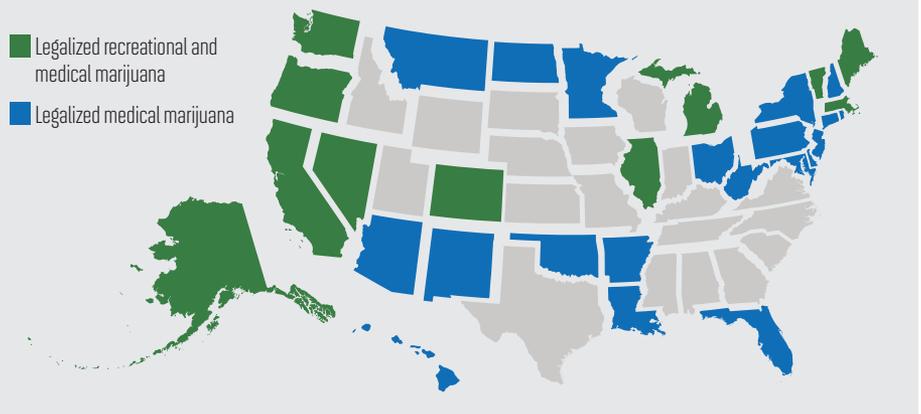
tunities through a reinsurer who has the capacity and risk appetite in a similar line of coverage or similar commodity,” Pyfrom says.

The few insurance solutions that are available for outdoor cannabis crops currently focus on specific perils like hail, flood and excess heat, explains Chris Boden, cannabis practice group team leader at Crouse and Associates Insurance Services. And because they’re so limited, these coverages also come with a hefty price tag.

However, Boden adds, “I believe the premiums are reasonable, based on the significant losses that could potentially happen. If you look at the hailstorm that happened in Oregon, a policy with a limit of \$1.5 million at a cost of \$50,000 would have been well worth it for the many cultivators who just lost millions of dollars’ worth of hemp crop.”

WHERE IS CANNABIS LEGAL?

- Legalized recreational and medical marijuana
- Legalized medical marijuana



Cannabis business owners are making a push to be treated like any other business and to have the same variety of insurance products available to them. According to Pyfrom, it’s becoming more apparent that older policies weren’t tailored to meet the individual needs of operators. “It’s coming,”

he says, “just not at the pace of the innovation that the industry itself is soliciting.”

For things to really take off, some major challenges need to be overcome – particularly the overall limits available for coverage, according to Preston.

“Often, a cannabis client needs to buy

SECTOR FOCUS: CANNABIS

CANNABIS INSURANCE CHECKLIST

Every cannabis business owner needs to have the following coverages:

- ✓ General liability
- ✓ Product liability
- ✓ Crop coverage
- ✓ Workers' comp
- ✓ Commercial auto
- ✓ Property

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more than one policy to get the liability and the property limits they need," she says. "There is still not enough reinsurance backing this industry. As carriers get more favorable loss experience in the industry, capacity might get easier to find, but that remains to be seen."

Pyfrom believes it's the level of uncertainty that's really holding things back. Insurance companies are struggling with the gray area surrounding FDA rulings, the many ways cannabis can be consumed, and the lack of scientific and actuarial data.

"As an underwriter, you want to be cautious, because there are new variables that you probably haven't thought of," Pyfrom says. "There is a new level of complexity because so many average day-to-day prod-

likely face stronger opposition.

The SAFE Banking Act would let financial institutions like banks, credit unions and insurance companies work with cannabis companies without retribution, which Pyfrom views as a promising step. "They should have access to a transparent banking relationship," he says, "so they don't have the abundance of cash they historically have on premise, which makes them a target for crime."

Both operators and insurers are looking closely at any activity surrounding the Strengthening the Tenth Amendment Through Entrusting States [STATES] Act as well. This legislation would amend the Controlled Substance Act to recognize the legalization of cannabis and the state legalization laws that already exist.



"Often, a cannabis client needs to buy more than one policy to get the liability and the property limits they need"

Susan Preston, Professional Program Insurance Brokerage

ucts are now being infused with cannabis."

The stigma surrounding the cannabis industry has also made it difficult for insurers to jump in with both feet – but as more states get on board with legalization, the road to recognition is getting shorter.

The legal environment

Federal legislation is one of the biggest make-or-break issues when it comes to opening up the market for cannabis insurance. In December 2018, President Trump signed the Farm Bill, making the commercial production of hemp legal across the country. The Secure and Fair Enforcement [SAFE] Banking Act is another key piece of legislation that was passed by the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives in September last year but is yet to come up in the Senate, where it will

Boden says this would be huge for the insurance industry. "I know a large publicly traded insurance carrier that's keen to get into the cannabis space, but they can't because their investors and partners are resistant to the Schedule 1 issue," he says. "If they become involved with a Schedule 1 drug, their reputation could be skewed, and a lot of investors don't want to be involved in that."

The evolving legal landscape notwithstanding, cannabis insurance is a huge niche right now. There are lots of opportunities, but the market is not without its challenges.

"It's exciting to be part of entrepreneurial history," Pyfrom says, "so pay attention and enjoy because it won't be this way forever as we move in the direction of mainstream. But for right now, it's fun and exciting and a great opportunity to be part of something big." ■

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How to hold walking meetings

More than just the latest fad, walking meetings can help encourage new breakthroughs. **Aytekin Tank** explains why you should consider them

THE AIR is crisp. The sun is shining. And I'm so glad to be outside. I've just spent the past several hours with my head down, solving an unexpected product development issue. Nothing feels better than venturing out after an intensely focused morning at my desk. I'm walking and talking with a team member about some ideas they have for our next project.

We're lucky that our San Francisco office is located near the beautiful Embarcadero; the three-mile-long sea wall is the perfect place to clear my head, get some exercise and engage in my favorite type of discussion: the walking meeting.

Among our teams, it's no secret that I don't love meetings. Pointless status updates that take everyone away from creative, high-value work are a huge pet peeve for me.

Obviously, we haven't done away with meetings completely. People still need to collaborate with me, with other team members and with the community at large. However, our goal is always the same: Maximize meetings to be as effective, enjoyable and energy-boosting as possible.

Over the years, I've learned a few tricks

for leading meetings that don't make participants wish they were napping in their cars instead. I always begin by identifying my primary objective and matching it to a corresponding meeting format. Generally speaking, meetings can be divided into six categories:

- **Status updates (pointless)**
- **Information-sharing (can be done in other ways)**
- **Decision-making (often necessary)**
- **Problem-solving (often necessary)**
- **Innovation (useful)**
- **Team-building (useful)**

The first two objectives can usually be accomplished via messaging software, phone or email. Translation: There's no need for a meeting. The exception might be a large company announcement that deserves human interaction.

Any objective that falls into the final four categories might warrant an in-person meeting. If only two people are involved and the weather is accommodating, I always prefer a walking meeting.

Why embrace walking meetings?

History shows that my preference for thinking, discussing and decompressing bipedally isn't at all unusual. Aristotle allegedly instructed students while strolling the Lyceum. Sigmund Freud conducted many of his analyses by foot. And Charles Dickens routinely walked about 20 miles a day with no particular destination in mind. The writer once walked an impressive 30 miles from his London home to his country residence at 2 a.m.

Recent walkers of the entrepreneurial sort include Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Weiner and Steve Jobs. Here are some of the reasons I and others prefer walking meetings.

1 They increase candor

Walter Isaacson, who wrote Jobs' biography, told *Forbes* that his subject insisted their first meeting happen on the move; it was Jobs' preferred way of both meeting someone and having a serious conversation.

LinkedIn's California headquarters even has its own bike path, frequently used by colleagues engaging in walking meetings. Igor Perisic, LinkedIn's vice president of

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MEETINGS



engineering, lamented to *Huffington Post* that desks create unwelcoming barriers during one-on-one meetings: “You feel like you’re at the principal’s office. That’s not what you want.”

Agreed. I want everyone at work to feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, opinions and ideas with me and anyone else on our team. And the casual nature of walking and talking helps achieve that goal.

“When we walk, we let our guard down,” says Marily Oppezzo, a post-doctoral student at the Stanford School of Medicine.

“Walking releases your filter. Ideas you hold back in a conference room come spilling out when you’re moving”

“Walking releases your filter. Ideas you hold back in a conference room come spilling out when you’re moving.”

For this reason, walking meetings are particularly useful when decision-making, team-building and bonding are critical.

2 They enhance creative thinking Walking seems to be a catalyst for generating fresh perspectives, discoveries and ideas. Oppezzo conducted a research study to determine the action’s effectiveness on creativity. Her project involved asking test



subjects to find alternate uses for everyday objects like car tires after either walking or sitting. Oppezzo found the walkers came up with more unique ideas than the sitters, both while walking and after walking.

Another study published in the *European Journal of Developmental Psychology* found that both children and adults performed a memory exercise better while walking than sitting. While researchers aren't quite sure of the reason, they speculate that movement produces superior brain functioning compared to that of typical multitasking.

Guardian columnist Oliver Burkeman echoes this theory: "I suspect the greatest mental benefits of walking are explained not by what it is, but by what it isn't. When you go outside, you cease what you're doing, and stopping trying to achieve something is often key to achieving it ... And in some hard-to-specify way, even the distractions of walking – traffic noise, people – seem to help."

Regardless of the science behind it, some of my best ideas have resulted from long strolls with no specific agenda in mind. Which is why I default to walking meetings when I want to innovate or solve problems collaboratively.

3 They're good for you

This one's a no-brainer: Walking makes you feel good. The average professional spends an average of 9.3 hours per day seated and 7.7 hours per day sleeping. While I don't consider sitting to be 'the new smoking,' I have found that regular movement is essential to my well-being.

One study found that 12 minutes of walking increased happiness, vigor and attentiveness significantly more than the same time spent sitting. Though I prefer to walk in nature, I'll take whatever I can get.

Some experts even say it might be better than running: "Walking can be as good a workout, if not better, than running," says Dr. Matt Tanneberg, a sports chiropractor. "I see patients all the time who plateau from running; they will run the same distance, speed and time, day in and day out. You need to constantly be switching up your exercise routine in order to get the maximum benefit for your health."

Quick tips for walking meetings

Though walking meetings are fairly self-explanatory, the following preparations can make them even more fruitful:

- **Plan your route:** Know exactly where

you're going ahead of time. You don't want to distract yourself with a map or risk a 30-minute walk turning into a 90-minute time suck.

- **Review relevant documents:** Know your meeting objectives and glance over supporting information beforehand. Also, don't forget to share any necessary information with participants.
- **Take follow-up notes:** Use your smartphone to take voice notes, send yourself an email or jot down important intel post-meeting.

Several years ago, Oracle executive David Haimes publicly committed to conducting more walking meetings. He says the shift resulted in greater productivity due to a decrease in typical office interruptions.

"In general, each of us jots down the things we want to discuss on a scrap of paper before we set off," Haimes says. "I can easily jot a reminder on my smartphone if I have an action I think I might forget. If we need to do something on a computer, we just end at my office and spend a few minutes in front of it together, but you would be surprised how little we need this."

There are plenty of reasons to experiment with walking meetings – enhanced creativity, greater candor and physical fitness are just a few potential benefits. While I still prefer the boardroom for more formal presentations, I will continue to seek opportunities to walk and talk whenever I can. **IE**

Aytek Tank is the founder and CEO of JotForm, an online form creation software with four million users worldwide and more than 100 employees. A developer by trade but writer by heart, Tank shares stories about how he exponentially grew his company without any outside funding. For more information, visit jotform.com.



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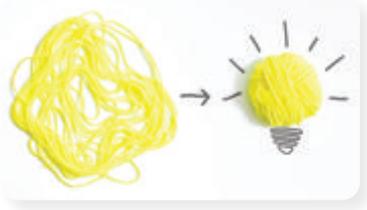
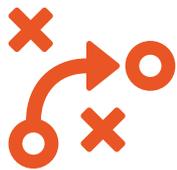


THE DECISION-MAKER

Doug Karpp's ability to see beyond black and white has served him well in his journey through crime underwriting and cyber insurance

After moving to Los Angeles, Karpp found himself working as an administrative temp at AIG. When the company asked him to stay, it opened the door to a career in insurance. "I had gotten into computers after college; those days were the budding of the internet, and a lot of my skill set was the nuts and bolts of computer systems. The next year, I joined the management liability and crime department, and my manager led me into a focus on crime underwriting."

1994
STUMBLES INTO INSURANCE

2010
MOVES TO HISCOX

Joining Hiscox gave Karpp the opportunity to develop crime products, including modular offerings. "It was a natural step, but also an excellent opportunity to build something from scratch. The ability to build my own product and develop that coverage made it an attractive opportunity for me. I had wanted to do something that resonated with customers in small and mid-sized businesses and hadn't been able to do it. This opportunity lit everything up."

2008
RIDES OUT A REBRAND

AIG's headline-grabbing bailout during the financial crisis culminated in a rebrand and the need for Karpp to reassure clients. "It was a tough time; it was hard to see the company you love being dragged through the mud on the news. We had to get out and meet with clients and get them comfortable with the direction forward."

2011
BECOMES CERTIFIED

After a series of promotions, Karpp became a certified fraud examiner, which allowed him to discover what customers needed and set him on a path toward cyber insurance.



"I was asked to join the special investigation unit in an advisory role, which brought me a little of the cyber piece of the puzzle. Even when conferences were all about embezzlement, there was a trend toward data security, which then evolved to email compromise – that inspired me into broader connections."

2012
TAKES THE LEAD

When Karpp took a position heading up crime underwriting on a national stage, it came with the opportunity to develop a package offering specific to the field. "Shortly after launch, it became clear that we had a successful stand-alone product. Building that was the most exciting time as an underwriter. It gave me the opportunity to develop broker relations nationwide. I concentrated on service and developed relationships that way. It was exciting to go from \$0 to where we are today."



2019
GETS PROMOTED

Appointed Hiscox's head of executive risks and cyber in the US, Karpp wants to open his mind to "the gray areas" to help the company grow.

"I want to be able to look back and see that we have built a proper machine to grow those businesses. When we develop products, we see what's not there and ask why not"

2014
SHOWS INITIATIVE



Karpp was pivotal in the development of Hiscox's cyber deceptions coverage, which was adopted into the cyber practice.

"We were seeing a lot of insureds submitting that kind of loss under their crime policy, but those policies had been developed too many years ago and had exclusions. Over time, as that became more prominent, the more it seemed that our best option was to cater to it. It's been a growing trend since then."



Bray instructs 10 students each semester in whitewater rafting as an adjunct professor at the University of South Carolina



273

Number of days Bray kayaked in 2018

30+

Number of kayaks he owns

25

Disabled veterans Bray has taught to kayak

UP THE RIVER

Other than helping clients find insurance coverage, there's nothing **Charles Bray** would rather do than paddle

CHARLES BRAY has a stray wave, which caught his kayak while he was fishing in 2015, to thank for leading him to his passion. "Afterwards, I sat on the bank and thought, 'I have to learn how to whitewater kayak' – so I went and bought a whitewater kayak," Bray recalls.

From there, Bray, the owner of South

Carolina-based Bray Insurance Group, dedicated himself to learning via trial and error before earning certifications as both an instructor and an instructor trainer. An Air National Guard veteran, Bray gained these designations to facilitate his involvement with Team River Runner, which takes disabled veterans out on the river.

"The most important thing is to make sure they have fun," he says.

Bray himself makes sure to have that kind of fun almost daily, starting his workday at 6 a.m. so he can spend time on the river. And nothing stops him: "I'll paddle when it's freezing," he says. "I've paddled with ice in my beard."



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