

November 2-3

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Marketing & Communications Working Group gathered November 2-3, 2016, to talk through strategies that are elevating the role of marketing, both tangible and intangible. The Working Group focused on digital content strategies and learned about trends and tactics from content powerhouse, Atlantic Media Strategies. The group also received updates on pre-election politics, InsurTech and leadership development resources from Council staff. Woven throughout the session were joint discussions on individual issues and challenges.

PARTICIPANTS

ABD Insurance and Financial Services
Acrisure
AHT Insurance
All Risks, Ltd.
The Crichton Group
EHD
Flood and Peterson

Gehring Group, Inc.
Heffernan Insurance Brokers
The IMA Financial Group, Inc.
INSURICA
Lockton, Inc.
The Plexus Groupe LLC

MARKETING POP-UP: CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Rob Trube, executive director of marketing and communications for Acrisure, shared with the group examples of three recent initiatives leveraging employee benefits, cyber and government affairs content.

Highlights:

1. **Multi-Channel Lead Gen Campaign for Employee Benefits Broker**

Project: Utilizing a timely benefits research study, the campaign used email, telemarketing (through a live call navigator that routed the call directly to the brokerage).

Results: Generated 400 prospects (6.9 live calls/hour)

- Sources used:
 - NexSales (India – live call navigator turns call directly over to producer)
 - MiEdge – lead gen and analytical tools

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- Content Generation: Zywave and Sparxoo (agency)
- Resources mentioned for content writing include Zerys, Content Runner, WriterAccess and Braffon

2. **“Meet Your Partner” Videos**

Project: Video has been the most effective and efficient way for Acrisure to introduce its newly acquired partner firms to each other and share their best practices. The videos, which are produced in-house, are shown at their Agency Partner Meeting and live on their website.

3. **White Paper: Where the Candidates stand on Top Healthcare Issues**

Project: Using content from The Council’s Government Affairs team and other industry content sources, Acrisure produced and shared a white paper on top healthcare issues and the positions of both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. White paper was shared with Acrisure’s partner firms for business intelligence.

Ruth Rohs, vice president of corporate communications for The IMA Financial Group, Inc., led discussion for participants to share a 2016 challenge or a new initiative in order to glean feedback and insight from the group.

Topics Included:

- How much of a brand disconnect is there between leadership, producers and “the desk?”
- How do you deal with brand inconsistency between different divisions or different regional branches (e.g., retail division has different colors, logos, while other division has another)?
- Tactics and case uses for personalization and specific targeting (speaking to the client directly)
- How strong is the marketing relationship with your sales team?
- How do you fix a culture of disconnect? What role does marketing play in driving cultures in your firm?
- How is marketing helping to drive broader business objectives?
- What tools and strategies can increase efficiency (CRMs, social media tools, integrations, outsourcing)?

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Highlights:

- Need to integrate departments and lines of business to allow for more cross-selling opportunities (do you want 50% of something or 100% of nothing?)
- Managerial training for producers could improve cross-department dynamics
- Resource: Staffing solution organizations like Patra or ResourcePro have proven helpful to some firms for increasing operational efficiency; they act as an extension of your team and do not work with the client directly
- Tying CRM usage to compensation continues to be a key driver for adoption (especially among Salesforce customers)
- Customer experience is diminished because some of the data is not integrated to provide a fuller picture for tracking customer behaviors and the ability to provide a richer stewardship report
- Many participants are confronted with challenges between the lack of integration between CRM and marketing automation or email platforms. Producing RFPs continues to be inefficient and arduous without integration. Many firms expressed challenges with producing RFPs so they are consistent (in brand messaging, design and capability overview). Would like solutions for integrating CRM content more seamlessly into RFPs.

ACTION: Attendees using Hubspot and Epic discussed coordinating a call to Hubspot regarding API creation. If a group is interested, they will probably build it for little, if any, cost.

POLITICAL UPDATE

Joel Wood and Joel Kopperud from The Council's Governmental Affairs team provided an update on the state of affairs in Washington, the presidential election and the status of legislation important to the agent and broker industry.

DIGITAL CONTENT STRATEGIES

Atlantic Media Strategies President Jean Ellen Cowgill presented on the trends and tactics of today's content and how to engage with audiences in new ways. In 2015, social content posted by brands increased by 35% and audience engagement

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decreased by 17%. To succeed in your digital content strategy, you must “relentlessly focus on your audience—the people who read, follow, share and love you.”

Other Stats:

- 35% of businesses have a documented content strategy
- 42% of businesses will publish new content at least weekly
- 55% of businesses will increase their content marketing spend in the next year

Three Main Tactics to (Re) Focus Around Audience Needs:

1. To appeal to your audiences, target their soft identities (shared goals and aspirations; shared fears), not just demographic identities
2. To provide each audience with a way in, craft a *constellation of content*
 - a. Truncate long form pieces into shorter articles to give your audience another way to consume information
 - b. If you don't have the resources to create your own content, consider curating outside content via a roundup but be sure to briefly add your voice and lens (*why* this particular content is important to your audience)
 - c. Optimize both the print and digital experience of your content
3. To make the most of your assets, use smart resurfacing
 - a. Reutilize content by pushing out previously published material when the topic is top of mind and the content is still relevant (ex: “What ISIS Really Wants”)
 - b. There is no need to apologize or explain resurfacing content

INSURTECH UPDATE

Insurance Technology, or InsurTech, is an evolving sector aimed at using technology to drive efficiency within insurance services. Investment in Insurance Technology startups has increased significantly over the past year. The Council's SVP, Strategic Resources & Initiatives, Cheryl Matochik presented on the investments, strategies and players involved in emerging InsurTech startups in the commercial insurance space which generally aimed at four areas: new means of distribution, help in claims adjusting, big data analysis for underwriting and early efforts at incorporating the Internet of Things.

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Matochik also spoke about new information and developments within Zenefits and Lemonade.

The forces behind InsurTech are the combination of data and technology exploding, expanding client expectations and significant capital available from traditional and alternative providers. Small commercial, workers comp and personal lines (particularly life and auto) are especially attractive to tech entrepreneurs as they are massive product lines that accompany painful consumer experiences (notably for younger generations that value direct access and self-education). Traditional and new players are emerging as e-agencies (Embroker) and direct carrier models (Lemonade) as traditional insurance talent is migrating to the insurance tech ecosystem.

Some other players mentioned in this space include: Gusto, Insureon, Coverhound, CoverWallet and Next Insurance. For now, the focus of new ventures is mostly on solving problems that exist within the industry, as opposed to those that provide broadly applicable technology, such as data warehousing or blockchain.

NEXT MEETING

The next Marketing & Communications Working Group meeting will take place at the frontend of The Council's Legislative & Working Groups Summit, Monday, February 6 – Tuesday, February 7, at the Mandarin Oriental in Washington, D.C.

We are seeking topic recommendations for our February meeting and ask that you take a few minutes to respond to our survey about the November meeting, which was both emailed to you and posted to our Basecamp.

QUESTIONS?

Contact The Council's Susan Rushford at susan.rushford@ciab.com.