

Main Street

INDUSTRY NEWS

INSIDE

House Votes to Give Automatic Work Comp to Alien Workers » 7

Special Report: Insurance Shopping Auto Style » 10

MetLife Enters the Pet Insurance Market » 17

Benefits: Married? Single? There's a Difference » 22





SAVE 75% OF YOUR STAFF'S TIME TO COMPLETE A SUBMISSION

STREAMLINE YOUR SUBMISSION PROCESS WITH **eFORMS WIZARD**.

IT'S NOT MAGIC

IT JUST WORKS LIKE IT

As a producer in an independent agency, are you tired of the endless back and forth working with your underwriter? Do new, required forms somehow show up late in the process? Do last-minute data corrections make it difficult to obtain accurate quotes at the outset?

What if there were a way to accurately complete all data insertion and easily send completed forms to your underwriter in one pass? Software like that would allow you to quickly block the market and provide your client with an accurate quote the *first time*...

Now there is a way. Using eForms Wizard you can streamline your submission process and block the market faster.

Bronze level package available for free to all PIA members or upgrade to Gold level package for \$50 per user per year (a 50% PIA member discount off the regular price).

- Access ACORD, agency, and carrier unique forms.
- Input data once and it shares across multiple forms.
- Available on or offline—complete your client interview with or without the internet.
- IRMI definitions integrated, enabling producers to easily discuss coverage options.
- Create packages of applications to ensure your producers cross sell.
- Build, share and edit forms across your team in a secure PDF or editable format.
- Share multiple forms easily with wholesalers and carriers.
- Get to market in hours — not days.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT

www.avyst.com/mypia



AVYSTTM
eFORMS WIZARD
AUTOMATED WORKFLOW MANAGEMENT

Did you know?

Did you know that PIA's company council, The PIA Partnership, has conducted nationwide research about the insurance buying preferences of small business owners?

The research is encouraging because it found that small business owners strongly prefer independent insurance agents as they make choices in today's online world.

However, the results also serve as a wake-up call that agents must take steps to continue to demonstrate their value and also be more engaged online.

PIA and the companies belonging to The PIA Partnership have created a public website that helps agents understand PIA's findings.

PIA members also have access to a private website containing a series of strategies and tools to help them stay ahead of online competition in commercial lines.

To access the newest PIA Partnership project, ***Small Business Insurance & The Internet – The Voice of the Commercial Lines Customer***, visit us at www.pianet.com/voiceofthecustomer.

If you are not a PIA member and want to access all of the tools available through this program, contact us for a membership application or visit us online at www.pianet.com/joinpia.



Local
Agents
Serving
Main Street
America™

National Association of Professional Insurance Agents
400 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314-2353
www.pianet.com | membership@pianet.org | (703) 836-9340



Contents

House Votes to Give

Automatic Work Comp to Alien Workers | 7

The U.S. House has passed a bill that will impact immigrant farm workers and will require employers to provide them with workers' compensation.

Pets: An Employee

Retention & Recruitment Tool | 8

Want to recruit that special employee? Want to keep one that you think might be going elsewhere? Try letting them bring their dog to work.

Special Report:

Insurance Shopping Auto Style | 10

Insurance Shopology is what NexisLexis Risk Solutions calls the product. Actually, it's not a product. Insurance Shopology is a survey of the what and why behind consumer auto insurance shopping.

Multitasking:

Tough on Everyone but Millennials | 15

Doncha just hate multitasking? So many things to do at one time and so little time in which to do them.

MetLife Enters the Pet Insurance Market | 17

A couple of years ago MetLife made a marketing decision. For three decades the company used Charles Shultz's beloved character Snoopy and the rest of the Peanuts gang as a marketing tool and as the company's face.

Hospital Spending in the U.S.

Look at \$1 Trillion | 19

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released statistics last week that said healthcare spending in 2018 totaled \$3.6 trillion. That's a phenomenal amount of money. Of that \$3.6 trillion, a third — or 33% — was spent in hospitals.

Done Deals:

3rd Quarter Mergers & Acquisitions | 20

Mergers and acquisitions topped \$4.17 billion in the third quarter of 2019. The report from data and analytics firm GlobalData said that's a rise of 51.2% over the activity of the second quarter and a 34.2% jump over the four-quarter average of \$3.11 billion.

Benefits: Married? Single?

There's a Difference | 22

It's benefit season. We're all trying to figure out — employers and employees — what benefits we'll need and have in 2020.

PIA NE IA EVENTS

Professional Insurance Agents NE IA and The National Alliance Nebraska and Iowa CIC & CISR Designation | 25

Upcoming Events Calendar 2020 | 26

1st Quarter Education 2020 | 30

ADVERTISEMENTS



Contact us to place an ad. Cathy Klasi, Executive Director (402) 392-1611

Think  first

SHOW YOUR PIA PRIDE!



Showcase the PIA member logo on your business cards, letterhead, and more.

Download Now: www.pianet.com/pialogos



Main Street INDUSTRY NEWS

PIA FOR NEBRASKA AND IOWA

PIA Association for Nebraska and Iowa is committed to focusing its resources in ways that cast the most favorable light on its constituents. We are dedicated to providing the type of programs, the level of advocacy, and the dissemination of information that best supports the perpetuation and prosperity of our members. We pledge to always conduct ourselves in a manner that enhances the public image of PIA and adds real value to our members.

SUBSCRIBE OR COMMENT

Professional Insurance Agents NE IA

Attention: Editorial
Main Street Industry News
920 S 107 Avenue, Ste. 305
Omaha, NE 68114

Email: office@pianeia.com
Ph: 402-392-1611
www.pianeia.com

The PIA NE IA, **Main Street Industry News** reserves the right to edit your comments to fit space available. We respectfully ask that you keep the comments to 200-300 words.



Join Our Facebook Fan Page
Professional Insurance Agents of NE IA

ADVERTISING QUESTIONS

Cathy Klasi, Executive Director
(402) 392-1611

.....

This publication is designed by **Strubel Studios**.

IS YOUR E&O X-DATE HERE?

Considering a change?

Let the PIA quote your E&O

Steve Bailey

(402) 392-1611

Steve@pianeia.com



*E&O Coordinator
Steve Bailey*

HOUSE VOTES TO GIVE AUTOMATIC WORK COMP TO ALIEN WORKERS

The U.S. House has passed a bill that will impact immigrant farm workers and will require employers to provide them with workers' compensation. If the bill passes the Senate and if the president doesn't veto, it will supersede the workers' compensation laws in the individual states as they relate to immigrants.

The bill is the Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2019 and it had 63 co-sponsors. They were from both parties and the bill passed 260 to 165. One of the things it does is change a temporary worker program into a certified agricultural worker status. The other is work comp reform.

Here's what the bill says about work comp: "if a job opportunity is not covered by or is exempt from the State workers' compensation law, a registered agricultural employer shall provide, at no cost to the worker, insurance covering injury and disease arising out of, and in the course of, the worker's employment, which will provide benefits at least equal to those provided under the State workers' compensation law."

Source: Business Insurance

Help Build Your Family's Financial Future with PIA Trust Insurance Plans



TRUST

PIA SERVICES GROUP
INSURANCE FUND

www.piatruster.com

(800) 336-4759

Insurance Plans Designed with PLA Members in Mind

Term Life • LTD • STD • AD&D

Business Overhead Expense

Hospital Indemnity

Insurance Program Administered by Lockton Affinity, LLC



PETS

AN EMPLOYEE RETENTION & RECRUITMENT TOOL

Want to recruit that special employee or keep one that you think might be going elsewhere? Try letting them bring their dog to work.

Why? A workforce packed with millennials who want to bring their pets to work want changes from employers. Some companies are pioneering the move. They are firms like Amazon, Mars, Petco, Uber and Airbnb.

That's good, however, experts in employee relations say not enough companies are experimenting with the idea. Those that are allowing employees to bring their dogs to work say the benefits have been amazing. Employee wellness is improving and so is productivity.

Even better, recruitment and retention has improved.

Sofia Montgomery of the HR and benefits company Justworks said they love having pets around. “We have on any given day upwards of 10 dogs in our office,” she said. “People really love it. Everyone says that it makes them happy and gives them moments of relief and laughter.”

Dave Bradley is a vice president at Mars Petcare. It’s part of the Mars candy company. He said they have a new pet-friendly headquarters in Tennessee with a dog park with wi-fi, coffee bars that have water stations for pets, furniture that is designed with pets in mind and a 60 acre outdoor dog park with walking paths.



“Everything from the flooring and furniture, to the landscaping and amenities, was designed for associates to enjoy time at work with their pets,” Bradley said. “Research shows that people thrive in pet friendly workplaces. For us, it’s a no brainer, and we hope that other companies will consider opening their doors to pets as well.”

By the way, Mars Petcare did a survey and found that most people will chose to work at a pet friendly company over one that is not.

Here’s why. Most households — 67% — have a pet or pets. But only 7% of employers are offering a pet friendly workplace. The good news is that a lot of companies — 15% of the U.S. total — are now at least offering pet insurance.

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) says that is up from 9% in 2015. Along with pet insurance a lot of companies are offering pet bereavement days.

Pet insurance is a good thing but Bradley said a pet friendly workplace is the way to go. They are just better for employees.

“There are so many benefits to having pets in the workplace, from reducing stress and creating community, to boosting morale and reducing isolation, to of course increasing productivity,” Bradey added.

Source: Employee Benefit News. Photo by Jamie Street on Unsplash and Drew Hays on Unsplash



SPECIAL REPORT

Insurance Shopping Auto Style

Insurance Shopology is what NexisLexis Risk Solutions calls the product. Actually, it's not a product. Insurance Shopology is a survey of the what and why behind consumer auto insurance shopping.

While the focus is auto insurance, some of the things learned about auto insurance shopping may also apply to other lines of insurance. It applies to insurers and to agents alike.

The survey begins by acknowledging how competitive the auto insurance market has become and it explains why.

"The U.S. auto insurance marketplace has become highly competitive, with steady annual

revenue growth each year from new consumers entering the market. At the same time, consumers are shopping for auto insurance more than ever before, in large part because carriers have made it easy for them to do so," the survey introduction states. "The end result? In an insurance marketplace plagued with retention woes, it is tough for carriers to attract and retain the best customers. The leading question is: how can you step ahead of the competition in this tight and challenging market?"

And with that the analysis starts with some insights and it states that the shopping habits for auto insurance is driven by demographics and behavior as well.

- Consumers consider themselves to be loyal but that doesn't necessarily apply when it comes to choosing an insurance carrier
- Price is the top reason that consumers shop
- Life events also drive shopping behavior
- Addressing incremental touchpoints can result in satisfied customers and improved retention rates
- Addressing incremental touchpoints also helps with cross selling and up-selling opportunities

The NexisLexis Risk Solutions analysts suggest taking a “proactive, data-driven approach to monitoring and anticipating key events in the lives of insureds” and say doing so can give a company an advantage and can help grow revenue.

They also point out that the retention levels for all carriers for auto insurance is just over 82% and it's been just above that mark for the last couple of years. However, while it seems like good news the management of LexisNexis Risk Solutions wanted to know what created the insurance shopping frenzy of those switching and they wanted to know why.

This is what they learned from the over 2,000 people quizzed.

- 62% of auto policies are shopped off cycle and not within the traditional renewal window
- 40% of all auto policies were shopped in the last year
- 78% of policyholders have shopped their auto insurance in the last five years
- 16% of auto policies are shopped in the 30-days immediately after a renewal

To learn more about auto insurance shopping, LexisNexis divided people into two groups: shoppers and non-shoppers. Surprisingly — especially so in the case of the non-shoppers — it appears that shopping is a common occurrence that happens equally in the two groups.

Or put a different way, while even non-shoppers shop, just one in five in both groups combined actually switch carriers.

While both appear to look around, they have much different ways of exploring. Shoppers tend to shop around online. They are also more likely to go directly to an insurers website and are more likely to use a rating tool than non-shoppers.

The difference is 42% to 26%.

Another commonality. Whether a consumer is a shopper or a non-shopper they tend to like personal help with their purchase. They want someone on the phone who works directly with the carrier or they want an independent insurance agent.

In the case of the agent members of the PIA, we think contact with an independent agent is best.

- Shoppers want the personal touch 68% of the time
- Non-shoppers want it 83% of the time

When it comes to the actual shopping, non-shoppers who've shopped recently are more likely to:

- Research auto insurance in person
- Purchase through an agent
- Renew a policy immediately upon receiving notice or automatically renew

- Pay just some attention to coverage and price at the time of renewal

Shoppers are more likely to:

- Research auto insurance online
- Contact insurance companies or independent agents while doing research
- Purchase auto insurance online directly through the insurance company
- Renew the auto policy within 30-days of receiving notice of renewal
- Very closely review both coverages and price at renewal time

Another surprising conclusion of the survey is how informed people are about their policies. Most are up to speed on them and what they contain, and do their research on them before the shopping experience begins.

And 72% are very aware that they can switch carriers at any given time.

Non-shoppers are believed to be more loyal than shoppers but the survey also found that price — these days — is more important than loyalty. In fact, price is the main reason people change.

Ironically, it is also the number one reason people decide to stay with their current carrier. Of concern to carriers are the people that want to change and that are unhappy but don't change because of price.

It is something that needs to be considered when marketing to individuals.

Even when Non-shoppers who've shopped recently research their insurance options, they typically do so because of price. However,

for this group, other drivers that send them shopping include:

- The desire to stay informed about different prices and offerings
- Their policy is up for renewal
- Their premium is increasing

Again, what is clear from the LexisNexis survey is that people mainly leave one carrier for another because of price. This isn't just the case for those with lower incomes. The surveyors found those making between \$100,000 and \$150,000 a year will switch carriers for savings of as little as \$100.

Sometimes even less.

When it comes to price half of those identified as shoppers say they shop at every renewal or if they think their premium is too high. That leads us to renewals.

Non-shoppers first:

- Non-shoppers are more likely to renew than shoppers
- 38% of them renew with their existing carrier immediately upon receiving a renewal notice
- 27% of non-shoppers renew with little or no review of the policy

Shoppers:

- They are more likely to renew within 30-days of receiving a renewal notice
- 70% review both price and coverage before renewing

This is a huge hint for insurers. Shoppers — says the survey — are “a highly engaged segment.” It is something LexisNexis says

insurers should pay attention to and exploit in their outreach strategy.

Next up in the survey is information on whether insurers ought to appeal to loyalty. Here's why that's a good question:

- 50% of shoppers expect to shop again in the next year
- One in five — shoppers and non-shoppers — will switch carriers when they shop
- That said, non-shoppers are less likely to shop around
- Less likely, yes, but recent non-shoppers think an event will happen in the future that will cause them to shop
- When non-shoppers end up shopping 10% of them will change carriers

As for insurer satisfaction, both shoppers and non-shoppers seem to be pretty satisfied with their carriers.

- 80% of non-shoppers are satisfied
- 72% of shoppers are satisfied

After exploring price, LexisNexis Risk Solutions analysts looked into other things that could get consumers to change carriers. These are a few of the items:

- Adding or removing a driver
- Buying or leasing a new vehicle
- A drop in household income
- Purchase of a new house
- Getting married or divorced
- Moving or relocating

There's more:

- 60% of the respondents said they'd

experience a life event in the last year

- That event caused them to shop their auto insurance
- 65% expect a life event to occur in the next year or two
- In that group 60% think it will influence their decision to shop their insurance again
- 40% of non-shoppers think an upcoming life event will cause them to shop

The conclusion of the survey is this — insurance purchasing is very fluid. The more agents and carriers understand what's happening these days, the easier it will be to retain customers.

“The U.S. auto insurance marketplace is highly competitive, with steady annual revenue growth each year from new consumers entering the market,” the report noted in its conclusion and with that it went on to ask a question.

“It can be very challenging for carriers to stay abreast of consumer shopping behavior and retain their best policyholders. With price serving as a primary insurance purchasing factor, life events presenting a potential shopping trigger and loyalty being a nebulous attribute, what is the competitive opportunity for carriers?”

That opportunity — it appears — is offering personal and “perfectly timed” outreach to meet the needs of the insured.

“Those carriers that have insights into changes within their policyholders' lives or who know when consumers are shopping their insurance will have a leg up on the competition,” the LexisNexis analysts concluded.

Source: LexisNexis Risk Solutions. Photo by Averie Woodard on Unsplash



INDUSTRY-LEADING
TECHNOLOGY.
SO YOU CAN FOCUS ON
WHAT MATTERS MOST.



As a crop insurance agent, you've most likely been busy this year. That's why RCIS makes your job easier, with expanded Precision Ag and mapping capabilities, designed to save time and increase efficiency. We also provide outstanding claims service, giving your clients an excellent experience when they need it most. When it comes to weathering the storm, you've got this.

Contact an RCIS field representative or visit RCIS.com today.

RCIS is an equal opportunity provider. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Some products not available in all states or counties. This is intended as a general description of certain types of insurance and services available to qualified customers provided solely for informational purposes. Coverage is underwritten in all states by Rural Community Insurance Company, Anoka, MN except in Montana where hail coverage is underwritten by Tri-County Farmers Mutual Insurance Company, Malta, MT. Nothing herein should be construed as a solicitation, offer, advice, recommendation, or any other service with regard to any type of insurance product or services. Your policy is the contract that specifically and fully describes your coverage, terms and conditions. The description of the policy provisions gives a broad overview of coverages and does not revise or amend the policy. Coverage may vary by state. Coverages and rates are subject to individual insured meeting our underwriting qualifications and product availability in applicable states. RCIS is a registered trademark of Rural Community Insurance Company. © 2019 Rural Community Insurance Company. All rights reserved.

MULTITASKING



Tough on Everyone but Millennials

Doncha just hate multitasking? So many things to do at one time and so little time in which to do them. There's your schedule to follow but as soon as you start working on something up pop a dozen emails that need handled immediately. So you start answering them and the phone rings.

Then more emails come up.

After that the boss pops in and wants to chat about your schedule for the day and has a dozen things for you to do that aren't on your schedule. And what? Is that more emails? Then the texts start coming and on the day goes.

Some of us — experts say — average more than four information technology (IT) switches a minute.

It's too much. Overwhelming. If only we could multitask better. But we can't. In fact, multitasking might as well be a foreign language. We don't speak it and we can't do it.

Millennials — it turns out — can. It's not a legend. New research says they're actually very, very good at multitasking. In fact, millennials will tell you it's really easy. Some will even offer to give you lessons. Not that those lessons will do you any good.

Insert laugh there. A rueful one at that. But that's true. It won't likely do you much good at all.

As a joke a lot of people are now calling millennials the "net generation." They can use a bunch of technologies (IT) all at once and can do so quite easily. Or so says the researchers at Florida Atlantic University's Charles E. Schmidt College of Science.

These researchers became the first to actually study the phenomenon. They took 177 mostly college aged subjects and divided them into three groups:

- One group received IT interruptions
- One group did not
- One group was a control group

The three groups were compared for accuracy, the ability to complete tasks and their anxiety level. The results were then published in ***Applied Neuropsychology***. Researchers found that those switching between technologies did not have a diminished performance when compared to those that weren't interrupted and those in the control group.

What did puzzle lead researcher Monica Rosselli, Ph.D. is a diminished performance from some subjects in the group that didn't receive any IT interruptions.

"We were really surprised to find impaired performance in the group that did not receive any information technology interruptions. It appears that the Net Generation thrives on switching their attention and they can do it more efficiently because information technology is woven throughout their daily lives," she said. "Because younger generations are so accustomed to using instant messaging, pop-ups like the ones we used for our study, may

blend into the background and may not appear surprising or unplanned, and therefore may not produce anxiety."

Also of note, all three groups reported very little anxiety. Researchers didn't find any stress or anxiety either.

Research done with the general population found that it takes 25 minutes to return to the original task after an IT interruption. Worse, 41% of those interruptions will result in the task not being done at all.

They also found that emails alone cause workers 96 interruptions a day and add an additional one and a half hours of recovery time a day. So what this says is that younger generations are just better at handling technology than the rest of us.

"How we adapt to technology and leverage it to our advantage by deciding what information we attend to at any given moment has substantial implications on our ability to remain valuable and productive in our respective work and education domains," study co-author Deven Christopher said. "Results from our study may provide a basis for further research, especially because younger generations are developing in a more connected world than preceding generations."

For now, the conclusion is, since these people grew up with technology and have used a lot of technology practically since they were babies, it's a no brainer. They have "greater digital literacy" than any of the generations before them.

Or to put it a different way, they can switch attention more efficiently than other generations.

Source: *Insurance Journal*



METLIFE...

...ENTERS THE PET INSURANCE MARKET

A couple of years ago MetLife made a marketing decision. For three decades the company used Charles Shultz's beloved character Snoopy and the rest of the Peanuts gang as a marketing tool and as the company's face.

The ads are still considered to be iconic.

The relationship between MetLife and the company now managing Shultz's properties cost MetLife \$12 million a year. MetLife's global chief marketing officer Esther Lee said the company has chosen to go another marketing direction.

"Snoopy helped drive our business and served an important role at the time," she said.

Maybe the decision was a bit premature. Not lost on MetLife is the potential profitability of pet insurance. Snoopy could have been valuable to help promote MetLife's new acquisition, PetFirst Healthcare. No terms have been announced and the deal is expected to close in the first quarter of 2020.

Growth in pet insurance acquisition has risen by 20% each year since 2014. The North American Pet Health Insurance

Association (NAPHIA) said the premium volume hit \$1.42 million by the end of 2018 and is growing.

PetFirst covers over 40,000 pets and is sold through animal welfare societies. MetLife's U.S. business president Ramy Tadros said the company plans to begin offering the insurance through its group benefits distribution channel.

It currently reaches 41 million employees and their dependents.

"Pet insurance has become an increasingly important voluntary benefit, and this transaction allows us to capitalize on this rapidly growing market opportunity," Tadros said. "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 against unexpected out-of-pocket pet health expenses."

MetLife — like many other insurers — are starting to see the value of that line of insurance. Estimates are that 85 million families in the U.S. have pets. Of that number just 2% have pet insurance.

Sources: Forbes, Insurance Journal. Photo by Lydia Torrey



PIA MEMBERS - ACCESS THE TOOLS, TECHNOLOGY AND SUPPORT YOU NEED TO GROW YOUR FLOOD BUSINESS

The Hartford and PIA have joined together to make it easier for PIA member agents to provide their clients with flood coverage through The Hartford. The program is available to PIA members and their policyholders in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.

HELPING YOU MARKET

- On demand training
- Webinars
- Marketing materials and newsletter
- Dedicated Flood Sales Executive
- Access to Transfer Consultant - we make moving your flood business to The Hartford easy
- Access to Training Consultant - we help you build flood expertise

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY FOR EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

- Flood zone determinations
- SEMCAT and Vertafore integrated flood quote technology
- Electronic application submission
- Assistance in obtaining elevation certificates
- Technological upgrades due to legislative changes

MEASURING YOUR SUCCESS

- Claims reporting
- Policy database download and maintenance
- Electronic movement of premium and commission funds
- Increased revenue with competitive commissions
- Reports on demand
- Repetitive loss review

THE PIA ADVANTAGE



When you participate in PIA National's official flood insurance program from The Hartford, you have the power of PIA behind you.

PIA's dedicated staff is ready to help if you need assistance. And, you'll have access to The Hartford's Flood Insurance Marketing Support Center.

CONTACT US

For more information about The Hartford's Flood Insurance program for PIA agents, contact your local Flood Sales Executive:

Michele Battis

Phone: 704-972-5918

Email: Michele.Battis@thehartford.com

LEARN MORE AT PIANET.COM/HARTFORDFLOODINSURANCE.





HOSPITAL SPENDING IN THE U.S. LOOK AT \$1 TRILLION

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released statistics last week that said healthcare spending in 2018 totaled \$3.6 trillion. That's a phenomenal amount of money. Of that \$3.6 trillion, a third — or 33% — was spent in hospitals. That figure totals \$1.2 trillion.

As you know Congress, the Trump administration and the presidential candidates are all throwing out information and plans to control and contain healthcare costs in the future. They are also all talking about high drug costs and what to do with them.

What no one pays much attention to these days is exactly how much we're spending in — and on — hospitals.

It turns out — as this report notes — that hospitals are getting a higher share of the nation's healthcare dollars than pharmaceuticals. In fact, the report says prices for prescription drugs fell for the first time in 40 years. However, while prices seemed to have dropped, spending on drugs rose 2.5% to \$335 billion. That's 9% of total healthcare spending.

Back to hospital spending, CMS Administrator Seema Verma said the \$1.2 trillion is why the Trump administration wants to force hospitals to be more transparent with their costs. The increased transparency — she contends — will boost competition and cause costs to drop.

Hospitals don't agree, they don't like the Trump plan and have filed suit to have it stopped.

That led Verma to point out that the administration's plan on transparency is not only needed, but that it will work. "With hospital prices increasing 2.4% in 2018 — and with price increases driving the growth we're seeing in hospital spending — why wouldn't we want to make hospital prices transparent?" she said.

The \$3.6 trillion spent on healthcare in 2018 is an increase of 4.6% over 2017 and accounts for 18% of the U.S. economy. When the math is finished, it amounts to \$11,172 per person in the U.S.

Source: *The Hill*. Photo by Daan Stevens



DONE DEALS

3RD QUARTER MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

Mergers and acquisitions topped \$4.17 billion in the third quarter of 2019. The report from data and analytics firm GlobalData said that's a rise of 51.2% over the activity of the second quarter and a 34.2% jump over the four-quarter average of \$3.11 billion.

Most of the activity is in the U.S. It has a 33.8% share of the deal value for the year. The total is \$12.35 billion so far. During the third quarter the U.S. had 121 deals. That's up 12.04% over the second quarter and a 4.3% hike over the last four-quarter average.

Top-5 insurance industry deals accounted for 100% of the overall value of the third-quarter deals:

- Prudential financial spent \$3.5 billion to acquire Assurance IQ
- Jade Mountain Partners bought White Eagle Asset Portfolio for \$384.25 million
- Markel picked up The Hagarty Group for \$212.5 million
- Aspidia financial spent \$75 million for Pavonia
- Old Republic National Title Insurance bought Surety Title Agency but no dollar figure has been announced



farm

home

auto

Providing over 125 years of exceptional service and peace of mind—so you can focus on what matters most.

Always alongside you.



farmers mutual
of nebraska

Contact:

Andy Kraus, CPCU
Vice President of Agencies
akraus@fmne.com | 800.742.7433

fmne.com

BENEFITS

MARRIED? SINGLE? THERE'S A DIFFERENCE



It's benefit season. We're all trying to figure out — employers and employees — what benefits we'll need and have in 2020.

It turns out that when it comes to benefits being married is much better than being single. Or so says a new report from Thomsons Online

Benefits...

The firm's vice president of client solutions is Matthew Jackson. He said married employees get more paid time off and receive more employer-contributions to their healthcare and their pension plans than those that are single.

This is true of 90% of the companies in the U.S.

“I don't think companies are deliberately penalizing single employees, [but] the changing nature of the family structure and what happens outside of work has to be reflected inside of work,” Jackson said.

As proof Jackson took a look at the language that has been used in benefit policies and they tend to be aimed at the traditional family unit.

“The legal definition of partner in a policy, for example, refers to spouse,” Jackson pointed out. “It's about bringing this world more up to date and in line with what society is like today. If companies follow these policies to the letter, it's not inclusive or acknowledges how the workforce is changing.”

Jackson and Thomsons Online Benefits report points to a Census Bureau calculation that says 110.6 million of us — over age 18 — are single. And single women make up a larger part of the workforce than ever.

Benefits...

Jackson points out — have not kept up.

- Married employees get an average of 3.6 more days of personal time off
- They get more time for bereavement than single employees
- 70% of employers offer family paid leave only to those with children
- This in spite of 39.8 million Americans caring for sick and disabled family or loved ones

“Workplaces need to broaden the definition of things like bereavement leave and partner coverage and broaden the definition of dependent,” Jackson said. “This is where the

argument for personalized benefits comes in — you do you, within the boundaries of the law.”

He says healthcare is a good place to start. The Thomsons study found:

- The average monthly married employee health care plan contribution is \$462
- The single employee gets an average \$344
- In a decade the married employee gets an extra \$14,160 in healthcare benefits

“If you're single, you're missing out on benefit value. [Employees] can get that back in some sort of health allowance that's more suited to [their] lifestyle,” Jackson added.

- 83% of employers agree that benefits should be offered to all employees equally
- Yet just 59% of companies actually do

Jackson says supporting all workers equally is becoming more and more necessary to keep top employees or to recruit top talent. And offering some people better packages than others can also lead to conflict.

Younger companies — Jackson points out — have figured this out. “The newer companies on the block that aren't burdened with legacy are more likely to be pioneers in this space,” Jackson said and added that older companies are getting the message and making changes.

“It's more impressive when companies are reinventing themselves and transforming the way they do things. They have to undo a lot of norms that have been done for decades,” Jackson concluded. “There's a lot of room and opportunity for change, and it's all certainly moving in the right direction. It's happening right now.”

Source: *Employee Benefit News*. Photo by Ivan Cabañas on Unsplash

YOU
DESERVE
SPEED

YOU WANT A CLAIM CHECK IN YOUR CUSTOMER'S HAND QUICKLY. WE CAN HELP MAKE THAT HAPPEN.

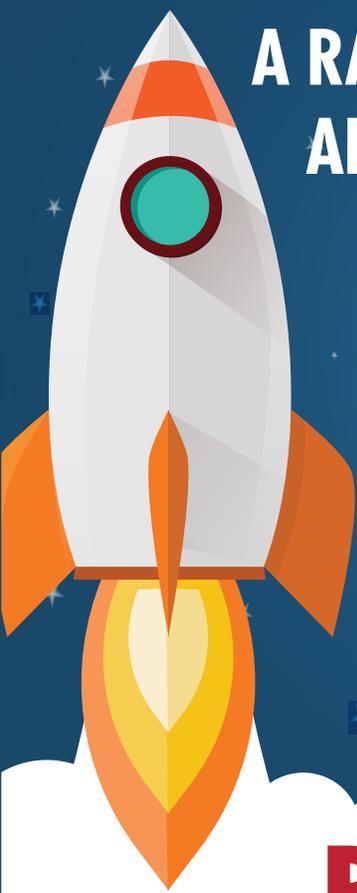
Your insureds are happier when crop insurance claims are paid swiftly. That's why our agents and adjusters have tools no one else can offer – smartphone claim reporting, web-based claims, iPad/tablet processing, and a one-signature workflow – which make submitting, working, and verifying claims quick and easy. In addition, ARMtech's mobile app, Policy Holder Access website, and AgriNet® software work together to keep agents and producers informed about the status of claims, while electronic direct deposit guarantees prompt payment. You deserve speed – It's an ARMtech Advantage.



800.335.0120 | www.armt.com
ARMtech Insurance Services, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider



A RATER FOR THE CARRIERS YOU ALREADY HAVE, AND MARKET ACCESS FOR THOSE YOU DON'T



ACCESS OPTIONS

| | Monthly Cost | Notes |
|--|--|---|
| Wholesale Market Access Provides agents with wholesale access to multiple carriers along with a comparative rater and web-based client manager. | Personal Lines \$45 Commercial Lines \$45 | For first 5 users Each Additional User |
| Wholesale Best of Both Worlds Provides wholesale market access to multiple carriers and the ability to get quotes under your own contracts. Includes comparative rater and web-based client manager. | Personal Lines \$45 Commercial Lines \$45 | Per user per month Per user per month |



PIAMarketAccess.com

*Current PIA Membership Required. Available in the 50 U.S. states and DC. Carrier availability varies by state. Provided through partnership with InsureZone.com of Texas, Inc.

CONGRATULATIONS FOR YOUR EARNED DESIGNATION

The Professional Insurance Agents NE IA would like to congratulate everyone who has earned a designation from The National Alliance in 2019.



CIC Designation

Ms. Lauren Augustin, CIC, CPCU
Grinnell Mutual Insurance
Grinnell, IA

Ms. Madison Worzalla, CIC
Cottingham & Butler
Dubuque, IA

CISR Elite Designation

Ms. Linzie Michelle Morris, CISR Elite
First Gabrielson Agency
Belmond, IA

CISR Designation

Ms. Cara Renee Hellman, CISR
Holmes Murphy & Associates
Waukee, IA

Ms. Jennifer Simoens, CISR
TrueNorth Companies
Cedar Rapids, IA

CRM Designation

Mr. Colin J. Green, CIC, CRM
Cottingham & Butler
Dubuque, IA

Mr. Jeff Swim,
CRM, CPCU, ARM, AAI, AU, AINS, AIS
Holmes Murphy and Associates
West Des Moines, IA

Events Calendar 2020

For information and to register
[Click Here](#) or call (402) 392-1611.

| Date | Class/Webinar | Where | When |
|-------------------|---|-------|------------------------------|
| January 14, 2020 | Dead or Alive: The Many Functions of Life Insurance | NE/IA | Webinar: 8:00AM - 11:00AM |
| January 14, 2020 | Everything's Soaked and My Stuff Stinks: The Water Damage Webinar | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| January 15, 2020 | Insurance Issues for Today's World | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| January 21, 2020 | Commercial Property Claims That Stink and How To Handle Them | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| January 22, 2020 | Ethics and E&O: Synergy, Not Rivalry | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| January 23, 2020 | Construction Contracts: What The Ins. Agent Should Know, Do & NOT Do | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| January 23, 2020 | If It Moves On the Farm It Presents A Risk | NE/IA | Webinar: 8:00AM - 11:00AM |
| January 28, 2020 | An Hour with Kevin: Drones - Insuring Innovators, Enthusiasts and Idiots | NE/IA | Webinar: 1:00PM - 2:00PM |
| January 29, 2020 | Alphabet Soup: The Mistakes and Coverage Behind D&O, EPLI, FLI and EBL | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| February 6, 2020 | Cyber Coverage - Data Breach and So Much More! | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| February 11, 2020 | Adventures in Aging: Understanding Social Security & Medicare | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| February 12, 2020 | How Savvy Businesses Use Life Ins. to Hedge Against Financial Losses | NE/IA | Webinar: 8:00AM - 11:00AM |
| February 18, 2020 | Homeowner's Policy Coverage Concerns for the Modern Family | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| February 20, 2020 | Culture, Ethics and E&O: The Right Way to Run an Agency | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| February 25, 2020 | Additional Insureds & Certificates: Issues, Answers and When to Say No | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |

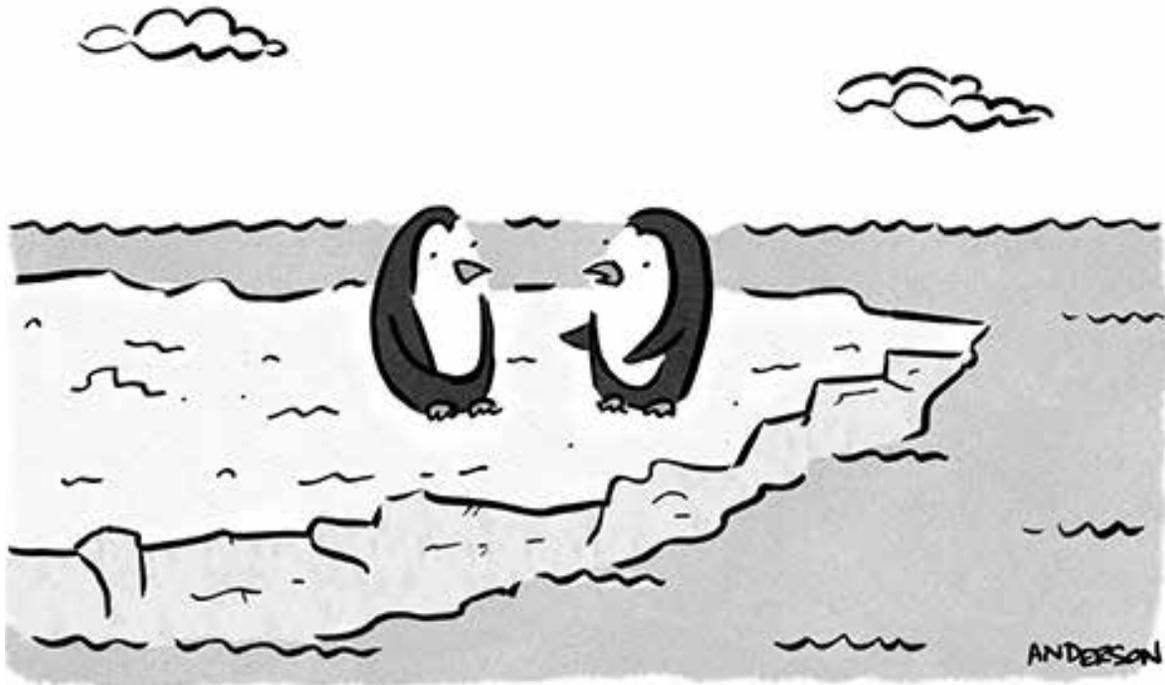
PIA NE IA EVENTS

| | | | |
|---------------------|---|-----------------|--|
| February 26, 2020 | CISR: Commercial Casualty 2 | Des Moines | Hilton Garden Inn Des Moines/Urbandale |
| February 26, 2020 | Flood Insurance and the NFIP | NE/IA | Webinar: 8:00AM - 11:00AM |
| February 27, 2020 | An Hour with Kevin: Extra Money for Bills, Beer or Both - Insuring Your | NE/IA | Webinar: 1:00PM - 2:00PM |
| March 10, 2020 | Dead or Alive: The Many Functions of Life Insurance | NE/IA | Webinar: 8:00AM - 11:00AM |
| March 10, 2020 | Ethics and E&O: Synergy, Not Rivalry | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| March 12, 2020 | Alphabet Soup: The Mistakes and Coverage Behind D&O, EPLI, FLI and EBL | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| March 12, 2020 | An Hour with Kevin: The S.T.O.R.M. Webinar (Coverage Concerns for Serious | NE/IA | Webinar: 10:00AM - 11:00AM |
| March 12, 2020 | CISR: Commercial Casualty 2 | Hiawatha | Kirkwood Linn Regional Center |
| March 17, 2020 | Everything's Soaked and My Stuff Stinks: The Water Damage Webinar | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| March 18 - 20, 2020 | CIC: Agency Management Institute | West Des Moines | Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites |
| March 19, 2020 | Coverage Problems Your Contractors Hate (and How to Solve Them) | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| March 24, 2020 | Exposures That Prove Why ALL Employers Need EPL Coverage | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| March 25, 2020 | CISR: Agency Operations | Bettendorf | Hilton Garden Inn - Bettendorf/Quad Cities |
| March 25, 2020 | Commercial Liability Claims That Cause Problems | NE/IA | Webinar: 12:00PM - 3:00PM |
| March 26, 2020 | An Hour with Kevin: S.T.O.R.M. The Sequel! - More Coverage Concerns | NE/IA | Webinar: 1:00PM - 2:00PM |
| April 1, 2020 | PIA National Advocacy Day | Washington, DC | The Hill |
| April 2-3 | PIA National Spring Meetings | Alexandria, VA | Hilton Crystal City |
| April 8, 2020 | CISR: Insuring Commercial Property | Waukee | Holmes Murphy and Associates |
| April 15 - 17, 2020 | CIC: Life & Health Institute | Lincoln | Marriott Courtyard |
| April 22, 2020 | CISR: Insuring Personal Residential Property | Des Moines | Hilton Garden Inn Des Moines/Urbandale |
| May 13, 2020 | CISR: Agency Operations | Hiawatha | Kirkwood Linn Regional Center |
| May 13 - 15, 2020 | CIC: Insurance Company Operations Institute | Cedar Rapids | Cedar Rapids Marriott |

PIA NE IA EVENTS

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------|--|
| May 20, 2020 | CISR: Personal Lines Miscellaneous | Bettendorf | Hilton Garden Inn - Bettendorf/Quad Cities |
| June 3-4, 2020 | PIA Annual Conference | Lincoln | The Graduate |
| June 10, 2020 | CISR: Commercial Casualty 1 | Waukee | Holmes Murphy and Associates, LLC |
| June 24, 2020 | CISR: Insuring Personal Residential Property | Hiawatha | Kirkwood Linn Regional Center |
| July 8, 2020 | CISR: Insuring Commercial Property | Bettendorf | Hilton Garden Inn - Bettendorf/Quad Cities |
| July 14 - 16, 2020 | CIC: Commercial Multiline Institute | Omaha | Omaha Marriott Hotel |
| July 22, 2020 | CISR: William T. Hold: Advanced Learning Seminar | Des Moines | Hilton Garden Inn Des Moines/Urbandale |
| July 22 - 24, 2020 | CIC: Personal Lines Institute | West Des Moines | Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites |
| August 5, 2020 | CISR: Insuring Personal Auto Exposures | Hiawatha | Kirkwood Linn Regional Center |
| August 19, 2020 | CISR: Insuring Personal Auto Exposures | Waukee | Holmes Murphy and Associates |
| August 19 - 21, 2020 | CIC: Commercial Property Institute | Lincoln | Marriott Courtyard |
| September 1, 2020 | CISR: Insuring Personal Residential Property | Bettendorf | Hilton Garden Inn - Bettendorf/Quad Cities |
| September 10, 2020 | CISR: Elements of Risk Management | Des Moines | Hilton Garden Inn Des Moines/Urbandale |
| September 15 - 16, 2020 | Ruble: Graduate Seminar | West Des Moines | Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites |
| September 23, 2020 | CISR: Personal Lines Miscellaneous | Waukee | Holmes Murphy and Associates |
| September 22-25, 2019 | PIA National Fall Governance Meetings | San Diego, CA | Kona Kai Resort & Spa |
| October 1, 2020 | CISR: Personal Lines Miscellaneous | Waukee | Holmes Murphy and Associates |
| October 14, 2020 | CISR: Insuring Commercial Property | Hiawatha | Kirkwood Linn Regional Center |
| October 7 - 9, 2020 | CIC: Agency Management Institute | Omaha | Omaha Marriott Hotel |
| October 28, 2020 | CISR: Commercial Casualty 1 | Bettendorf | Hilton Garden Inn - Bettendorf/Quad Cities |
| November 10, 2020 | CISR: Life & Health Essentials | Des Moines | Hilton Garden Inn Des Moines/Urbandale |
| November 11 - 13, 2020 | CIC: Life & Health Institute | West Des Moines | Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites |

WWW.ANDERSTOONS.COM



"Yeah, but it's a wet cold."



SAVE THE DATES

Tuesday, March 31 and
Wednesday, April 1, 2020
Washington, D.C.

Registration will open later this year. In the meantime, visit PIAAdvocacyDay.com for more information.



1st Quarter
EDUCATION
2020



Certified Insurance Counselor

- Feb 19-21 (Omaha) - Insurance Company Operations
- March 18-20 (Des Moines) - Agency Management



Certified Insurance Service Representative

- Feb 26 (Des Moines) - Commercial Casualty II
- March 12 (Cedar Rapids/Hiawatha, IA) - Commercial Casualty II
- March 25 (Bettendorf/Quad Cities) - Agency Operations



Certified Professional Insurance Agent

- Feb 19 (Omaha) - Sustain Success
- March 17 (Des Moines) - Sustain Success

The CE Partnership



NEW

1 Hour Webinars - Convenient & at your own computer

- Jan 28 - Drones - Insuring Innovators, Enthusiasts and Idiots
- Feb 27 - Insuring your Side-Gig
- March 12 - The S.T.O.R.M. Webinar

3 Hour Webinars - No Test

- Offered Weekly at either 8 -11 am or 12 -3 pm



*You're independent but **never alone.***



A Perfect 10



PIA Members: Read them all at PIAAgencyMarketingGuide.com.

Need more marketing support?

The PIA Branding Program includes direct mail/digital marketing, print/radio advertising and our extensive series of 1-pagers for your clients.

PIABrandingProgram.com

Thank you to the 2019 PIA Agency Marketing Guide sponsors:





Berkshire Hathaway
GUARD Insurance
Companies

AmGUARD • EastGUARD • NorGUARD • WestGUARD

Thank **YOU!**

HAPPY NEW YEAR to our agents, policyholders, employees, and friends who made this past year a successful one for Berkshire Hathaway GUARD. We look forward to working with you again in 2020!

APPLY TO BE AN AGENT AT:

WWW.GUARD.COM/APPLY/