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Jon's Blogspot



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Claims management – credit due

What 's not to love about being in claims? Variety, complexity and often an opportunity to assist someone in need. It is where the rubber hits the road in insurance...and for many of our corporate and insurance clients, their reputation is at stake when a claim is made against them.

So why then do we battle for recognition in the world of insurance? Why are the revenue generators given priority? Why is claims more often than not the last thing people think about when working on their insurance program? Why are people able to do it badly and get away with it?

I still recall vividly in my Chubb days meeting a claims professional from another company who told me he 'had been promoted to underwriting'. Maybe a promotion involved more money and status, but what I was left with was a clear understanding of where claims stood in that organisation...the poor relation.

I think things have changed for the better since then, but there is still a long way to go. Generally the education and training of claims staff is improving, and the quality of staff (while it remains an industry issue) is significantly better than when I started in the industry.

The recent floods were a great example of where management of claims was in the spotlight. By and large the industry recognized the tireless and selfless work done by claims people, often under great stress. I have huge admiration for our team and the industry in general for the response that was made - and despite suggestions from some quarters, I know no-one in our claims team enjoys denying a claim. Some of our team had sleepless nights about businesses in peril and they knew what the consequences of a denial meant. However, if you haven't paid premium for flood cover, and we have expert advice it was flood, there aren't too many avenues open to us. We can only hope the message is communicated in the right way with as much empathy as we can muster.

Claims is the window for the insurance shop: that is why performance in this area is so critical. It is when the insurance product is tested by a claim that its true value is delivered. Claims people are uniquely positioned in the industry to speak with authority on trends, issues and developments impacting underwriting, as it is generally claims activity that drives premiums. In my next blog, I will analyse this a little further, but if we want to continue to elevate claims as a legitimate and rewarding career path, we need claims to be heard and seen as a critical and leading part of the industry.

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