

# A Commercial Insurance Powerhouse

An Interview with Paul Horgan,  
Head of North America Commercial Insurance, Zurich North America

**EDITORS' NOTE** Paul Horgan is the Head of North America Commercial Insurance for Zurich North America and is responsible for the direction, management and performance of all commercial business in the U.S. and Canada. He joined Zurich in 2007 and has served as Head of Global Corporate in North America; Head of Group Reinsurance; and Chief Underwriting Officer for Global Corporate in North America. Horgan has more than 30 years experience in the insurance industry and served in a number of senior roles in alternative markets, underwriting, and finance before joining Zurich. Horgan holds a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Maine and an M.B.A. in finance from Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia.



Paul Horgan

**What does Zurich North America Commercial Insurance offer its customers?**

We offer the global strength of a leading insurance provider, but our real competitive advantage is in the industry knowledge and experience we bring in local markets. We offer solutions in five distinct business segments: Casualty, Construction, Middle Markets, Property, and Specialty Products.

Within Casualty, we provide a broad spectrum of casualty insurance solutions, from general liability to commercial auto, workers' compensation, energy casualty, and many others. Zurich is an industry leader in Construction, providing tools and resources to help our customers manage a variety of construction exposures. From solutions for contractors and design professionals to construction insurance products and tailored construction risk management services, our specialists provide insurance solutions for the risks our construction customers face today and may potentially face in the future. Our Middle Markets team offers customer-focused insurance solutions to small and large commercial customers, with extensive experience in the financial institutions, healthcare, international, manufacturing and wholesale trade, real estate, and technology industries.

From standard commercial property insurance to global property programs, our Property team offers a broad range of insurance solutions designed for manufacturing, distribution, healthcare, retail, technology, pharmaceuticals, financial services, and a host of other segments. Finally, our Specialty Products group provides insurance protection for emerging, volatile, and potentially catastrophic risks, with nearly 60 products in Accident and Health,

Casualty and Property, Credit and Political Risk, Management Solutions Group, and Surety.

**What differentiates Zurich from its competitors?**

As a global company, we offer a One Zurich solution to meet the growing demands of our customers and our ever-changing industry. Our customers can access any of our Commercial Insurance segments via a simple point of entry, which allows us to develop relationships with our customers and brokers that build trust and confidence in our people

and our brand. All of our segments are intrinsically linked in an approach that builds on our collective strengths and allows us to work cross-segment to provide the global strength and support our multinational customers are looking for or to capitalize on our experience to deliver local solutions that our small and large commercial customers require.

**How is Risk Engineering helping improve and change your customer's safety culture and performance?**

It's critical that business leaders stay up-to-date with evolving risk intelligence to manage their business – and their risks – more effectively. Rather than just insuring against it, Zurich offers tools, services, and training to help businesses build enterprise risk management processes. Our risk engineers conduct 60,000 customer risk assessments annually, working with businesses to make their risk management approaches more effective.

Our Risk Engineering covers the board in terms of risk management tactics. We once worked with a concrete contractor, who was experiencing above-average auto losses with its trucks, but our Risk Engineering team worked with that customer to implement a Fleet Safety Program that helped to reduce the customer's losses. During a dangerous virus outbreak, our Risk Engineers provided businesses of all kinds with health tips to help protect workers from getting sick and keep their operations running smoothly. Water or liquid damage is a leading cause of commercial property loss from a frequency/severity standpoint, and what often starts as a small leak can quickly spread through a building and cause structural, operational, reputational, and financial losses. Our Risk Engineering resources help companies manage these risks.

I'm proud to say that, in the commercial insurance industry, our technical capabilities in Risk Engineering are well-known and often the reason customers choose us.

**How do you keep the customer at the center of what you do?**

Developing strong relationships in the market allows our underwriters to develop a deep understanding of our customers' businesses and risk management needs and then come up with targeted solutions.

We also are further empowering our front-line underwriters by pushing greater transactional authority deeper into the organization, which allows our underwriters in the field to "make the call" without having to wait for authorization from the home office. As an underwriter at heart, I understand how important it is for our market-facing underwriters to have the sense of ownership and accountability to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of our customers and brokers. Happily, they tell us they are seeing a real difference.

Another priority in improving the customer experience is to thoughtfully assess our transactional processes. It's no secret that the "insurance process" in general – for example, submitting a risk for consideration, getting and binding a quote, policy issuance – can be time consuming. Based on feedback we've received from our customers and brokers, we are simplifying our process to make it easier for them to work with us by making it easier for our underwriters to do what they do best in a timely manner.

**What are some of the issues facing Commercial Insurance?**

Aging infrastructure remains a critical issue for the U.S., and Zurich is well-positioned to play a significant role in solutions to this public issue. As a leading insurance provider of construction projects in the U.S., Zurich has specific insight on the business risks associated with large infrastructure projects and the solutions needed to help protect the projects – and the businesses involved – from these risks. Also, as a leading writer of surety bonds, we have a critical role in protecting public and private investments in projects. Surety bonds are unique instruments by which we vet contractors and essentially guarantee funds will be available to complete the work, protecting all the parties involved in a major infrastructure project.

When it's all said and done, the winners in our industry will be those who can crack the code when it comes to giving customers what they need, when they need it. This is especially true in the mobile, always accessible society we live in today. That's why I'm passionate about the work we're doing to build on our highly respected commercial leadership position and on our strong, trusted brand – to serve every commercial customer in a way that feels personal, is effective, and is uniquely Zurich. ●