

Developing Relationships That Build Trust and Confidence

An Interview with **Randall Clouser**,
Head of Marketing, Distribution and Regional Management, Zurich North America

EDITORS' NOTE *Randall Clouser is Head of Marketing, Distribution and Regional Management for Zurich North America. He joined Zurich as Chief Executive Officer of Zurich Corporate Solutions in 1996. He moved to Switzerland as the Group's Chief Marketing Officer and subsequently became Chief Operating Officer and Head of the Growth Office. In 2008, Clouser returned to the U.S. to begin his current role. Clouser earned a bachelor's degree from American University and a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania. He is a Wharton Fellow and was named a David Rockefeller Fellow for 2011.*



Randall Clouser

We have a Select Broker® distribution strategy. This means that we are focusing our resources and capabilities on a handful of brokers, which allows us to focus our teams and assign them to brokers so we can develop the strong relationships critical to achieving a top-tier position with them. We also focus our resources to ensure that our initiatives are having an impact and helping the broker be successful. Finally, we are informed by data and analytics that help us be more efficient and productive with our customers and brokers.

On the customer side, we have global relationship leaders who manage some of our largest customers around the world. Through these relationships, we are able to get great insights into the needs of our customers and understand the unique challenges they face. This allows us to bring the top resources and capabilities we have to offer to address their needs.

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Underpinning this, we use metric scores to understand how well we are delivering for our customers and brokers at key moments of truth during the customer journey. This feedback is incredibly important for us to understand where we can make improvements in our operations, claims or other areas of the organization.

We close the loop on the feedback we receive by picking up the phone and talking with the customer or broker to better understand their experience and determine how we can improve upon it.

This gives us fact-based feedback and personal insights into how well we're doing.

How do you communicate and coordinate distribution efforts across your organization?

Within our regional structure, all of our underwriting capabilities are aligned to support each of our regions. The coordination comes from setting a clear strategy so we know where we are going to develop business and drive revenue. We then look to understand the opportunities for each of our Select Brokers and determine whether the opportunities in various product sets match with our underwriting capabilities. Then we create underwriting teams to go after the product sets we have identified as key opportunities.

It is about creating teams to focus resources on delivering the right capabilities to that broker and to the customers of that broker in a personal and highly responsive way.

The coordination is done through diligent execution, which includes understanding the broker and customer and working together as one team under the guidance of a business development leader responsible for managing that broker location.

It is very much about teamwork, which is one of our core strengths at Zurich.

How does Zurich differentiate itself in the industry and generate brand awareness?

We have to be passionate about customers and focus on helping them understand and protect themselves from risk. We have been in this business for more than 100 years in the U.S., and we are a well-established brand that provides customers with deep industry knowledge and experience, broad and flexible solutions and cutting-edge insights.

In the end, our brand identity enables us to connect with all of our audiences. It really reflects who we are as a company, and it's brought to life by our people. Our people are our best brand ambassadors. As much as digitalization is changing the expectations of customers, and the speed and pace of business, in our world, it is still a relationship business.

We have a very strong brand position, which gives our customers and brokers confidence because they believe in the brand. This is confirmed not only by our strong, global reach and deep capabilities, but it is also the relationships that our brokers and customers have with our people that helps differentiate us. ●

What is the focus for Marketing, Distribution and Regional Management at Zurich North America?

The digital world is changing consumers' expectations. Today, differentiation is less about the insurance product and more about how our customers and distributors engage with Zurich.

The Marketing, Distribution and Regional Management team focuses on two primary areas: understanding our customers, meaning their customer journeys and the touch points that matter most to them, and making sure that we are delivering an experience that meets their expectations. We also set the distribution strategy for the organization, which includes working with our brokers and distributors to define areas where their customer set matches our product set. Our go-to-market approach is driven through field teams in our five regions who bring together the capabilities that match with our select group of brokers and deliver Zurich in an effective and compelling way.

In the end, it is about delivering on our strategy, which calls for us to build on our strong, trusted brand to serve every customer in a way that feels personal, is effective, and is uniquely Zurich.

How do you approach relationship building and how important are metrics in this area?

Our focus is on developing relationships that build trust and confidence in our people and our brand. It is one of the key actions for delivering on our strategy.