

THE POWER OF THE BRAND



Randall Clouser

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

EDITORS' NOTE *Randall Clouser joined Zurich as Chief Executive Officer of Zurich Corporate Solutions in 1996. He then moved to Switzerland as the Group's Chief Marketing Officer and subsequently Chief Operating Officer and Head of the Growth Office. In 2008, Clouser returned to the U.S. and is currently Zurich's Head of Marketing, Distribution and Regional Management in North America. Clouser earned a bachelor's of science degree from American University and a master's of*

science degree from the University of Pennsylvania. He is also a Wharton Fellow and was named a David Rockefeller Fellow for 2011.

How critical is the brand to delivering growth as you look at the challenging times we are experiencing?

From my experience in building businesses, a strong brand is a critical component to enable growth in today's highly demanding market. The brand enables growth by requiring us to focus on understanding the changing needs and wants of our customers and prospects. We do this by embedding our brand attitude throughout the company and we deliver it at every customer and stakeholder touch point. We want our brand to reside in the hearts and minds of current and prospective customers, so it creates full demand for our products.

In an uncertain and changing market, we want our brand to be consistent and reflect a predictable customer experience. This consistency gives our customers confidence in their decision to select Zurich.

Do you push the Zurich brand or do you tie it in with the other brands?

When we launched our global brand strategy in 2004, the intent was to transform Zurich from a multi-local business to a truly global organization. Prior to 2004, we operated with several brands, mostly the result of acquisitions. Essentially, each country in which we operated had its own brand.

A big part of the global transformation of the company was building a unitary brand – the Zurich brand. This involved defining a set of common attributes that defined the brand. We then launched the Zurich brand internally. There was an extensive internal campaign to engage our employees in building the new Zurich brand before it was communicated externally.

The internal campaign ensured that each employee understood the brand experience that would define the company. This also enabled us to effectively and quickly migrate the sub-brands across the globe to the single Zurich brand and empower our employees to deliver a consistent, differentiated customer experience.

How challenging is it to differentiate? How do you create that brand understanding in the marketplace?

The challenge of every business is to find that sweet spot in the marketplace where they can differentiate and compete more effectively and more profitably than their competition.

Today's economy creates tremendous uncertainty, not only for business performance but for employee engagement. The hidden opportunity is to keep employees highly engaged in order to deliver a differentiated customer experience.

Research shows that employee engagement within our industry has dropped from 2010 to 2011. It also shows that highly committed

employees deliver 57 percent more discretionary effort and they are 87 percent less likely to leave the organization than less engaged employees. Therefore, the leadership challenge and opportunity is to energize employees around the brand and strategic business priorities; because higher employee engagement translates to higher financial performance, better customer service and faster execution.

Delivering a consistent customer experience from highly engaged employees is a powerful differentiator and competitive advantage.

How are you engaging employees in corporate responsibility efforts?

A company's workplace is an aspect of corporate responsibility, so engaging employees is an element of being a responsible business.

Corporate responsibility begins with the company's leadership setting the proper tone, creating the correct environment, and providing the right example. Behind that, we work hard to engage our employees in sustainability efforts. Successful employee engagement is about creating an attitude of caring, which aligns with personal satisfaction and contributes to business sustainability.

This year we are celebrating Zurich's 100th anniversary insuring America. We are proud of that history and we used this milestone to promote community service. We set a goal to complete 100 community projects during the year. The response of our employees was profound. They went out and completed 100 community service projects by June, and they are still going.

We really should not be surprised by our employees' response to corporate responsibility as "caring" is our brand attitude.

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How critical is consistent messaging and have you been happy with how that ties back into the Zurich brand?

Our brand message has evolved and it will continue to evolve as our business continues to develop. What has and will remain consistent is our focus on the customer and delivering a relevant and valued customer experience.

Are young people aware of what this industry offers?

We actively recruit at a select number of universities in order to promote our industry and Zurich. Interestingly, once people better understand the insurance business, they discover that it is a complex, diverse, and challenging industry. They see the opportunity to contribute and grow in so many ways.

Recruiting strong, new talent to Zurich is a key to our future success. To attract top talent, we must offer them more than a job. Today's graduates are looking to be part of an organization that cares about customers, employees, investors, and society. They are also proud that Zurich has a premier position in the industry and is a top 100 global brand. ●