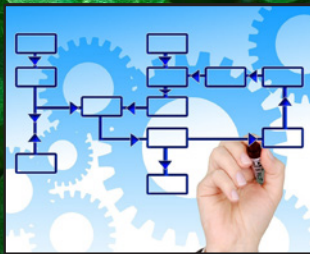




# THE Minnesota News



The **Value** of Agency-Centric Workflows  
by Mallory Cornell


AGENCY GUIDE TO INSURTECH

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## EMBRACE OR REPLACE

A HIGH LEVEL LOOK AT THE INSURTECH ECOSYSTEM

**Microservices:**  
The architecture behind the Internet of Insurance and Small Commercial Portal  
by Matt Banaszynski



**Top Ten Tips for Preventing Insurance Agent E&O Claims for 2020**  
By Aaron Simon

WEDNESDAY  
APRIL 29<sup>th</sup>  
2020

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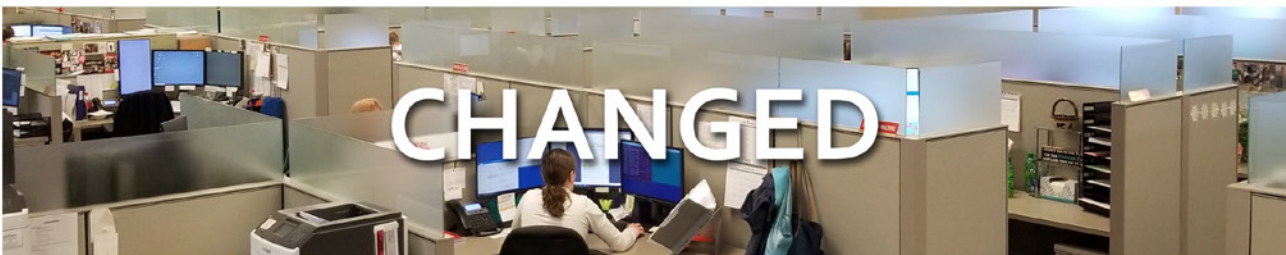
**MIAB EXPO 2020**  
Mystic Lake Center • Prior Lake, MN

**Capitol Notes**



THE LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MN INDEPENDENT INSURANCE AGENTS & BROKERS ASSOCIATION





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The world today is vastly different than it was in 1920. Over the past 100 years, North Star survived The Great Depression, a World War, numerous recessions, unprecedented technology advances and many other changes. It takes a combination of hard work, determination, informed decision making and a little luck to adapt to all these changes and still be around a century later.

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Spring 2020

The Minnesota News

# CONTENTS

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**14** Microservices: The architecture behind the Internet of Insurance and Small Commercial Portal

**21** Top Ten Tips for Preventing Insurance Agent E&O Claims for 2020

**26** Agency Guide to Insurtech

**31** The Value of Agency-Centric Workflows

**42** Risk Management Improvements to Help Your Agency

**45** CAPITOL NOTES: 2020 MN Session Preview

## Inside

- 5 President's Message
- 7 Executive VP Message
- 10 **MIAB EXPO 2020**
- 19 North Star Mutual Profile
- 29 IMT Insurance Profile
- 35 Liberty Mutual Profile
- 37 E&O Q&A
- 53 Education
- 56 Power in Partners

## On the Cover



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**DIVERSITY** AND **INCLUSION.**

BIG "I"  
**LEVEL UP** January 14 - 15, 2020  
AGENT SUMMIT New Orleans, LA

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend the 2020 IIABA Board of Directors meeting and Level Up Conference held in New Orleans, LA.

The "Big Easy" showed some real southern hospitality to our group of MIIAB representatives providing temperatures reaching into the 70's during the 5 day event. This I understand, was not the case back in the "Big Freezy" of Minnesota. As it turns out, the benefits of attending this IIABA conference extended well beyond the ability to thaw out for a while.

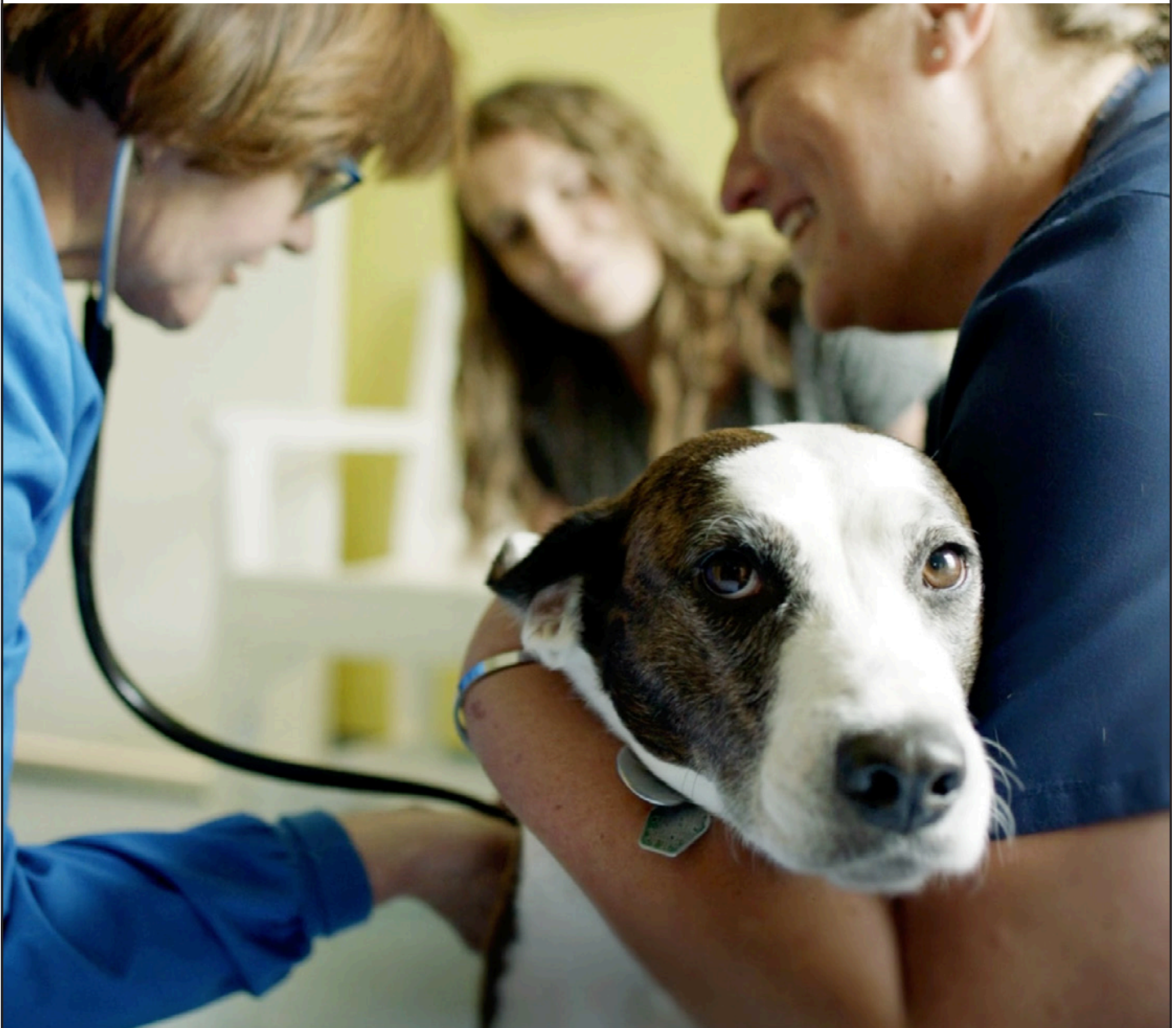
The many meetings set up throughout the week addressed a wide variety of issues, concerns and opportunities facing our industry. Here's just a few of some of the highlights:

- The agenda included discussions about BIG I services provided to its members like BIG I Markets and the increasingly successful BIG I HIRES program.
- Issues affecting agents like Anti-Rebating provisions, NAIC Annuity transaction regulations, Broad based privacy legislation and the Private Flood Insurance Model Act were addressed.
- The evolving world of Insurtech received attention as did the related industry innovations designed to squeeze out savings and efficiencies.
- The record setting contributions and resulting impact of InsurPac was highlighted. As you know, our members contributions to InsurPac help fund the lobbying efforts of the BIG I and their impactful and beneficial efforts in 2019 were identified and celebrated.
- Many agencies attended the convention to participate in the Best Practices seminar held during the week and the feedback I heard on this was great.
- Finally, another major topic during the meeting was an introspective look into diversity and inclusiveness in our industry. The Level Up session brought in a variety of talented speakers who focused on the changes in the population and the strengths and growth opportunities found in expanding perspectives. Innovative tools and ideas were discussed on how to build and maintain a diverse workforce and leverage the strengths found in our differences.

It was great to see where we are as an industry and the many talented people that are working hard to make it even better in the future.

**Kelly Bowe**  
2019-2020 MIIAB President





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## DIAMOND PARTNERS



## Insurance Company Partners Support the Dynamics of Selling and Sales Management Seminars

One of our major goals in setting up our Power in Partner Program over the last 11 years was to conduct sales and sales management schools for our members in partnership with our Power in Partner Insurance Companies. We want to thank our Platinum and Diamond Level Partners for their generous support in sponsoring over 60 participants this year. The key to this sales and sales management program is to have both the agents and their sales managers attend the class to insure their success after leaving the session.

Since our inception of the Dynamics programs, we have put over 200 agents and agency sales managers through this course, and it has been a huge success! The chairperson of the Emerging Leaders for MIIAB, Megan Corradi, MSc, CPCU, ARe from Stein Agency in Lindstrom, MN, stated the following:

*"Dynamics of Sales Management was a great course for professionals at any level. Whether you are a seasoned sales manager/agency owner looking for fresh ideas or a new sales manager/agency owner looking to gain a better foundation. You're sure to walk away from this course in a better position to lead, organize, and grow your agency. The instructors are very experienced and knowledgeable... and so are the students. This makes for a unique learning environment. The instructors listen and are able to match the interest and experience level of the class. This leads to a more tailored course that maximizes the benefit."*

In talking with Megan, she stressed that all young agents should take this program. As we build this program in the future, and more and more agents and agency sales managers attend, we will begin to conduct refresher courses to ensure the success of the individuals attending this program. We are pleased to announce that the first refresher course will be conducted at the MIIAB EXPO on April 29th from 8:30 am – 11:30 am at Mystic Lake Event Center. We invite all of those that have participated in this



## PLATINUM PARTNERS





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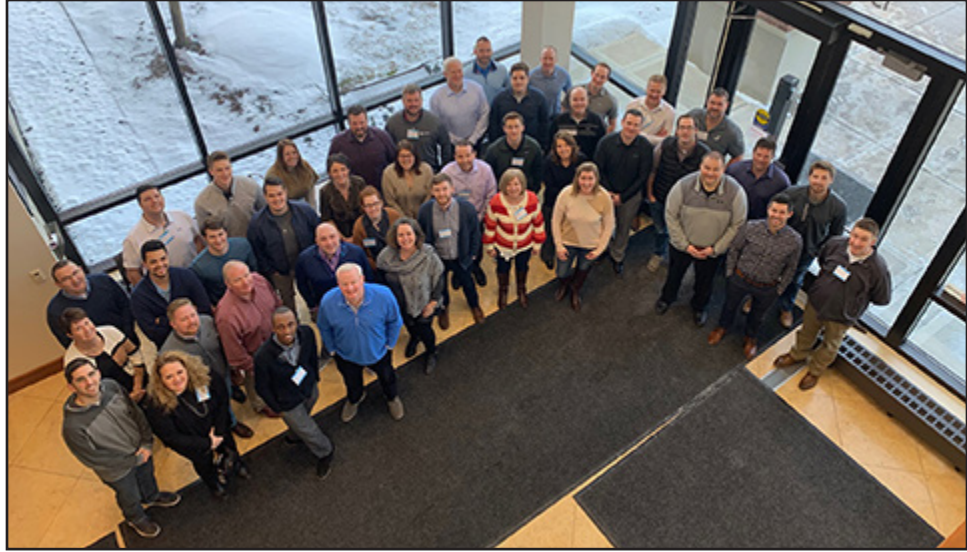
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No turtles were harmed during the making of this ad.



program over the last 4 years to join your colleagues in discussing your successes since the program with our instructor, Jeff Wodicka. This refresher course is also open to anyone else that would like to get a taste of the program and peak your interest for the next one.

But, we haven't stopped there...on October 26-30, 2020 we will be conducting the first DYNAMICS OF SALES MASTERS PROGRAM which is an intense 5 day program on sharpening your sales skills to become a successful independent agent. This class will be limited to 30 people so watch for the official registration in the near future.



Again, we would like to thank all of the Diamond and Platinum level partners and more importantly, we would like to thank the producers and their sales managers for making this an enormous success!



**Only 8 Weeks Away! - MIIAB EXPO -  
April 29, 2020 - Mystic Lake Center,  
Prior Lake**

It's that time again, Winter is passing and Spring is right around the corner...that means the MIIAB EXPO is coming! We are hosting the event at the Mystic Lake Event Center in Prior Lake. Contrary to some peoples perception, this is not the usual smokey and noisy casino...it's a brand new convention facility with free parking, top notch technology and new spaces. It is also convenient for most people to get to, in fact, you don't have to even walk through the casino, you can park at the event center if you wish. Now for the good stuff...

We have three outstanding learning opportunities for you and your staff. We will have the **Dynamics of Sales/Sales Management** Refresher course that we just spoke of above. Again, it is open to all attendees, not just those who've gone through the program. Next option will be **Active Shooter Training** presented by Marko Galbreath from T4Tactics. This is a topic that we don't normally conduct, however, with recent happenings throughout the country, we thought it would be a timely one. Marko's presentation is intended to give the participant an understanding of situational awareness, risk and threat assessment and how to recognize the developmental stages of an active shooter. We know that you all will find this program interesting and captivating. Our next option includes topics that are necessary and critical for agencies to understand in running their businesses. We have two former attorney generals, Lori Swanson and Michael Hatch, that work in the insurance field due to their understanding of the insurance industry, laws surrounding insurance, and their familiarity with the rules and regulations at the Department of Commerce. Mike and Lori will share with you their insights on **Agency Contracts, Employee Handbooks and Cyber Security**. This session includes 3 CE credits approved by the state of Minnesota.

More highlights for the day include the Awards Luncheon where we announce the winners of our annual awards including **Agent of the Year, Agency of the Year, Emerging Leader of the Year, Insurance Company Rep of the Year and the Company Award of Excellence**. We will be sharing these award winners in the next few weeks and we ask that you come and help celebrate their accomplishment. At the awards luncheon, we will also have a special presentation on the **Internet of Insurance** and explain how this technology will revolutionize the way independent insurance agents do business with their companies and clients AND, most importantly as a **MIIAB member, it is available to you for FREE!!**

And the icing on the cake will be the EXPO with an exhibit hall full of your company partners and vendors that complete the independent agency system. We hope we will see you there! **Mark your calendar for April 29, 2020 at Mystic Lake Event Center!**

WEDNESDAY  
APRIL 29<sup>th</sup>  
2020



# MIIAB EXPO 2020

## Mystic Lake Center • Prior Lake, MN

You  
won't  
want  
to miss  
this  
great  
event!

### 8:30am - 11:30am Breakout Sessions

#### Dynamics of Sales/Sales Mgmt Refresher - Isanti 1

Spend the best 3 hours of your life learning how you can grow your business, help your clients and increase your close ratio to 70%. The Master of Dynamics of Selling is joining our convention to change your business life. Two years ago, our association partnered with our valued carriers to jump start producers by aligning with Dynamics of Selling. The results have been amazing. If you've attended either of our programs this is a great refresher. If you've heard the talk from those who have, this is your chance to see what it's all about. As an added incentive we will be rolling out an exclusive training program designed to develop new producer hires and shorten their validation within your agency operation. An exclusive new training program, *Dynamics of Sales Masters Program*, will only be offered in two associations in 2020, coming to Minnesota, October 26-30, 2020



Jeffrey Wodicka, CIC

#### Active Shooter Training - Isanti 2



Marko Galbreath

This presentation is intended to give the participant an understanding of situational awareness, risk and threat assessment and how to recognize the developmental stages of an active shooter. We'll discuss ways to identify and avoid a violent attack. We'll discuss how to control your fear and emotions during an attack which will give you the education, confidence and skill to survive the unthinkable. The presentation includes numerous de-briefings from some of the most violent active shooter attacks this country has ever seen. Marko will give you primary source information from his personal interviews with victims, witnesses and law enforcement directly involved in these events. The presentation is not based on fear or paranoia but on educating people to avoid and or survive.

#### Agency Contracts, Agency Employee Handbooks & Cybersecurity (3 CE's) - Isanti 3



Lori Swanson

**Agency Contracts** - There are a lot of misunderstandings and confusion between agencies and agents involving employee v. independent contractor status, covenants not to compete, and the property interest of each party as to customer lists, customer files, etc. Also addressed are issues that confront an insurance agency when it acquires another insurance agency. Too many times the acquiring party fails to exert itself in reviewing compliance issues and regulatory failure by the agency being acquired. Finally, we will cover contracts between an agency and an insurance company, particularly as to what happens at the time of termination.



Mike Hatch

**Employee Handbooks** - This relates not only to the internal activities of the agency but also with regard to the internal activities of client businesses. There will be an emphasis on sexual harassment in the "Me-Too" era where too many small business owners have not adjusted to contemporary standards. There will be an emphasis on agent termination and some of the mistakes to avoid when confronting a problem employee. Finally, there will be a discussion on social media and the negative impact an agency can sustain when employees make snark comments about clientele or fellow employees on social media.

**Cybersecurity** - The legislature is likely to adopt the NAIC Model Act on cybersecurity and agency owners will be briefed on what steps they must take to come into compliance with the Act. Included will be a short presentation by a cybersecurity expert on the more common problems with cybertheft.



11:45am-1:00pm

# Awards Luncheon

Waconia 1-4



Kelly Bowe CIC  
MIIAB President  
2019-2020

**MIIAB Awards**  
Company Award of Excellence  
Company Rep of the Year  
Agency of the Year  
Emerging Leader of the Year  
Agent of the Year  
Presidents Award



Chad Ostermann  
MIIAB President  
2020-2021

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION FOR AN  
EXCITING NEW MIIAB BENEFIT**

INTERNET OF INSURANCE™



1:00pm-4:00pm

## Exhibit Hall

Minnetonka



4:00pm-5:30pm Reception hosted by the



**MN Independent Insurance  
Agents & Brokers Association**  
EMERGING LEADERS

and



Pre-Function Area (front of Minnetonka/Isanti)

Same Great Location - Mystic Lake Center



**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER ONLINE**

**Register Early Price Increase April 17**

# Registration Form

Please complete one form per participant.  
Photocopy for your associates.

**1**

**All Day**  
8:30am-5:30pm

**Morning Sessions, Awards Luncheon, Exhibit Hall & Reception**

Tuesday Morning Sessions

8:30am - 11:30am **Dynamics of Sales/Sales Management Refresher**

8:30am - 11:30am **Active Shooter Training**

8:30am - 11:30am **Agency Contracts, Agency Employee Handbooks & Cybersecurity (3 CE's)**

**\$150.00** Member

**\$200.00** Non-Member

**EXHIBIT HALL IS RESTRICTED TO AGENCY PERSONNEL, MIAB POWER IN PARTNERS AND EXHIBITORS ONLY.**

**2**

**Awards Luncheon Exhibit Hall & Reception**

**11:45am-5:30pm**

**75.00** Member

**95.00** Non-Member

**3**

**Exhibit Hall & Reception**

**1:00pm-5:30pm**

**\$45.00** Member

**\$65.00** Non-Member

Check which applies:  Agent  Company Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

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Agency/Company

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City State Zip

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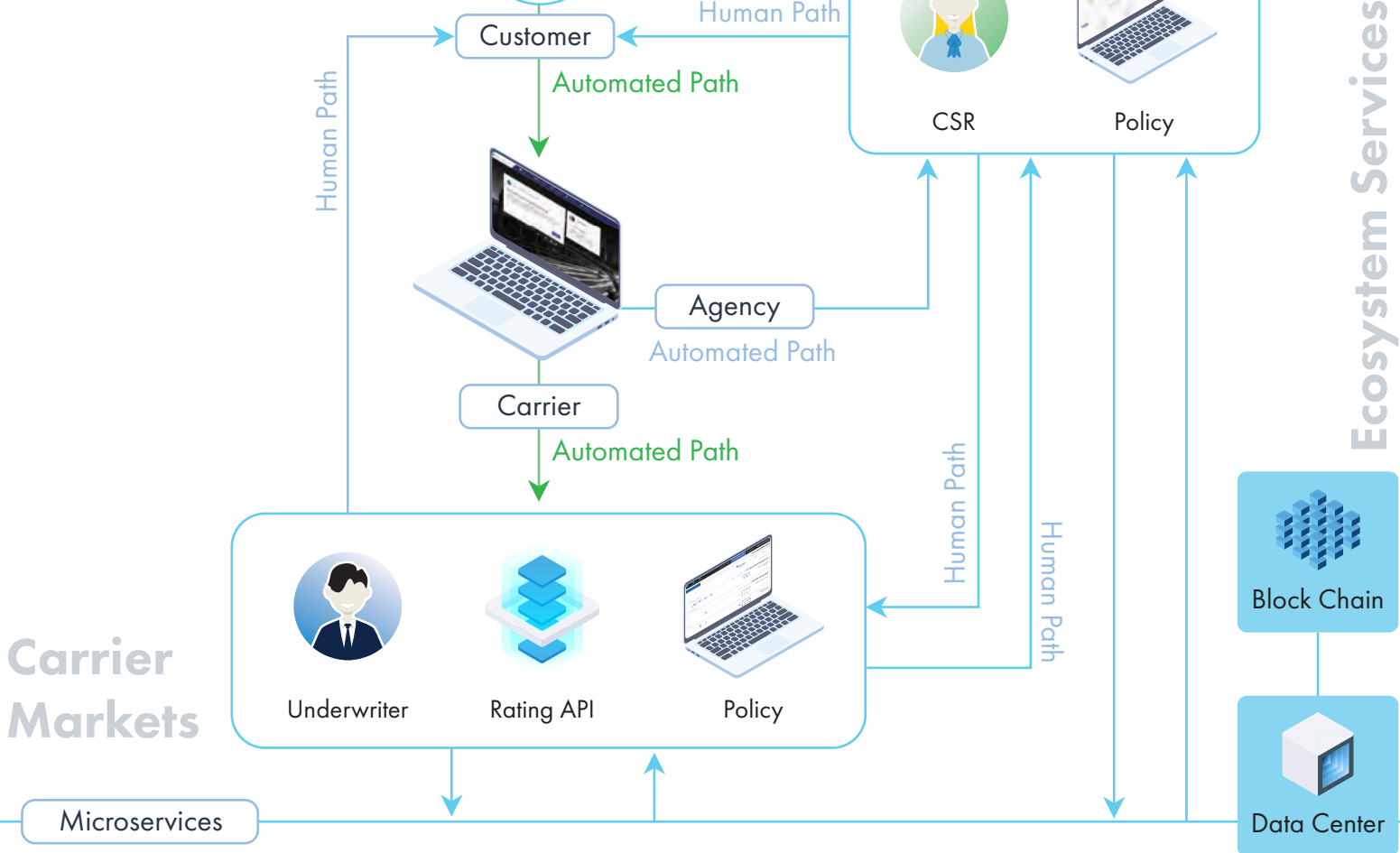
# Microservices

The technology behind the scenes.

INTERNET OF INSURANCE



## Customer Experience



## Carrier Markets

## Ecosystem Services

## Connected Microservices

- |   |  |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <br><b>NUCLEUS</b><br>Organization & People Graph           | <br><b>PIPES</b><br>Smart Data Pipes               | <br><b>SHERLOCK</b><br>Artificial Intelligence Optimization | <br><b>CLOCKWORK</b><br>Workflow Automation & Optimization | <br><b>VAULT</b><br>Security & Governance       |
| <br><b>NEXUS</b><br>Cross-Organization Mobile Collaboration | <br><b>COVERAGE</b><br>Policies, claims, & billing | <br><b>INQUIRE</b><br>On-Demand Data Collection             | <br><b>ALPHABETSOUPOUP</b><br>Marketplace & Exchange       | <br><b>BINDER</b><br>Content Management Service |



# Microservices: The architecture behind the Internet of Insurance and Small Commercial Portal



by Matt Banaszynski

## What do Uber, Netflix, Ebay, Amazon, Etsy and Coca Cola all have in common?

Microservices are an architectural approach to building applications. Before we get into why microservices are important and relevant to the insurance industry, we must first understand what an application is.

A simple Google search will tell you that, an application, also referred to as an “application program” or “application software”, is a computer software package that performs a specific function directly for an end user or, in some cases, for another application. An application can be self-contained, or it can be run as part of a group of programs (Microsoft Word and Microsoft Office, for example).

All you really need to understand is that an example of a traditional application program/software is an insurance agency’s management system or accounting software such as QuickBooks.

According to Jason Kolb, CEO & CTO at Dais and the Internet of Insurance, “Microservices represent a different approach to the way that large, complex software is built. You can think of microservices as building blocks, each with its own unique purpose, that can be combined in different ways to create larger, more complex applications. They’re typically separate projects within the codebase which means that teams can work on them independently and much more quickly. And the different microservices within an application talk to each other by means of API’s (Application Programming Interfaces). At the end of the day it’s a modular approach to software development that encourages reuse and speed, as well as the ability to swap out components as they become outdated.”

Microservices architecture has become more popular to increase scale, speed of change, ease of integration and ability to adapt to changing business demands and models. Amazon, Netflix, PayPal, eBay, Twitter and Uber, have all built and scaled their platforms based on microservices architecture. It continues to be widely adopted and expanded across various industries including insurance. However, this change is not being driven by traditional insurance technology vendors like Applied, Duck Creek, Vertafore and others you would come to expect, but by companies such as Dais and the Internet of Insurance.

Whether it’s on the carrier or agency side of technology, the industry has been haunted by complex monolithic applications or as we like to call them, legacy systems. These are the applications you’re probably familiar with such as policy management systems, claims systems, billing systems and agency management systems. These legacy applications are typically tightly integrated with and dependent on one another and must be deployed, upgraded and replaced simultaneously as a large monolith application. Therefore, when a carrier or agency wants to upgrade their systems, it takes a lot of time (often years) and money (often hundreds of millions of dollars) to do so. And because of the enormous amount of time involved, even once the upgrade is complete, the technology is almost always out of date. These large, complex, closed legacy systems are also the root cause as to why other third-party technology vendors can’t integrate with their systems. Conversely,

continued on page 16



it's also a large part of why those legacy systems don't allow for much integration with a broader ecosystem of applications.

The closed legacy systems of today are being replaced by nimbler microservices based on platforms like the Internet of Insurance (IOI) powered by Dais. The premise behind the Internet of Insurance and small commercial portal may seem simple, yet behind the scenes it is inherently complex consisting of technology ranging from microservices to APIs all coming together to form the perfect platform for independent insurance agents.

The Internet of Insurance's microservices-based platform takes a complex monolithic application and turns it into a set of services, which are faster to develop, and much easier to understand and maintain. Each of these services allows for continuous integration, upgrade and deployment, because each microservice can be developed and deployed independently at a fraction of the cost, saving both the developer(s) and user(s) lots of time and money.

### **How do Microservices, APIs, Platforms and Ecosystems fit together?**

Let's break down microservices, APIs, platforms and ecosystems in an easily identifiable and understandable manner. The following example serves as an analogy for a microservices based platform such as the Internet of Insurance.

Imagine you have a house (Internet of Insurance) and it is made up of a variety of goods (programs), appliances (applications) and other items like electronics (functions) that all serve a specific purpose to make this house operational. Individually these items are functional, but collectively they make a bunch of wiring (code), concrete, wood and plaster part of a greater purpose - a livable home. All these components - products, appliances, wiring, concrete, wood and plaster - that make up your home's infrastructure are the same as Microservices to a platform.

Many of the appliances and other items in your home such as its lights and devices would not be operational without electricity and may not be able to connect without the Internet. Electricity and the Internet are like forms of an API, they connect and power a home's (platform) infrastructure (microservices) appliances and products while bringing sustainability and functionality to your homes core components - wiring, concrete, wood and plaster.

Electricity is like your internal API(s) interconnecting your homes appliances and infrastructure (microservices) and the internet is your external API(s) connecting your home to other tools and resources and perhaps even other homes (think Ring Neighbors) within or across various ecosystems.

Your home (platform) is part of a community like a city, town or village, that is located in a state which helps make up the country. Communities, counties, states or countries are all examples of ecosystems.

Now let's say that sometime after your home is built, new technology comes out and you want to upgrade an appliance (application) such as your refrigerator. You wouldn't go out and purchase a new home just to get a new refrigerator, would you? Of course not, you would just go out and purchase a new refrigerator. Out with the old, in with the new.

This process is very similar to how a microservices platform is designed to allow for continuous integration, upgrade and deployment, because each microservice can be developed and deployed independently at a pace and cost advantageous to the user.

However, the way our current antiquated legacy systems are designed, you wouldn't be able to just go out and purchase a new refrigerator. Your choices are either to purchase a newer home with a newer refrigerator from the same builder for more money or find another, more expensive home by a different builder with a new or newer refrigerator or an older, less expensive home with a new refrigerator. How exhausting!!! The



world doesn't work that way, and neither should the technology that powers your insurance agency.

### **The Internet of Insurance and Agency Portal brings it all together**

While microservices are exciting and will accelerate the industry's ability to innovate, it is not the end all be all solution...YET! That is primarily because the industry's legacy systems seriously lag behind that of other industries. Dais built the IOI platform and agency portal on microservices architecture linked together by APIs which allow interconnected, interdependent networks or ecosystems of various participants to create and deliver innovative products and services at a fraction of the cost and time. It also enables those applications to integrate with other applications and services including Google, ISO, agency management systems, and many other third parties to add value to customers and differentiate agencies.

Not every legacy system, especially that of insurance companies, are built on microservices. As a result, a carrier's ability to integrate with other systems is typically limited, time consuming, difficult and expensive. It's for these reasons Dais has built in multiple pathways for carriers to connect to its platform, which means it can rapidly improve and evolve. What the IOI and agency portal are today certainly won't be what they are next week. One of the competitive advantages of modern applications like this is that these are constantly evolving thanks to their microservices architecture. This means the Internet of Insurance can scale, develop, deploy and integrate the Internet of Insurance and its proprietary products and services faster and better than most of its competitors.

Some carriers are promoting seemingly comparable companies touting solutions that look similar on the surface. But make no mistake, they are vastly different in their technology, capabilities, and approach to transparency, inclusiveness and the advancement of insurance agents.

The Internet of Insurance is leveraging powerful microservices architecture to build a new foundation for the independent insurance agency of the future. It is enabling new business models, new products, improved customer experiences for agents, and timely responses to new business needs (in hours and days instead of months and years). This will help agents remain relevant and competitive in a bricks and clicks marketplace. Microservices are accelerating the independent agent and their carrier's ability to innovate.

The IOI platform is designed to allow for easy integration of new technological enhancements while protecting particular trade secrets at the core of Dais' intellectual property. This type of open architecture allows for continuous build and integration across connected ecosystems and platforms and is prevalent among other leading technology companies outside our industry and in leading technology companies leading transformations in other industries

The Internet of Insurance's democratization of information and technology combined with its agency centric approach to improving the efficiency and profitability of its users' workflows (be sure and read Mallory Cornell's article titled, "The Value of Agency Centric Workflows") makes it the perfect partner for the Independent Insurance Agents of Wisconsin and its carrier partners. We are connecting our independent agency channel partners with the Internet of Insurance Platform and agency portal while building our own capabilities to connect, develop and deploy new and existing products and services to our members. Join us, for there is strength in numbers!



#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

Matt Banaszynski is the CEO of the Independent Insurance Agents of Wisconsin. He is an expert on agency technology. He is a national speaker and consultant on helping independent insurance agencies leverage technology to win in a bricks and clicks marketplace

# For whatever lies ahead.

Since 1916, Auto-Owners Insurance has been dedicated to the independent agency system and proudly stands behind the agents who represent us.

A photograph of a young couple in a living room. The man, wearing a dark blue t-shirt and jeans, is holding a newborn baby in his arms. The woman, wearing a white t-shirt and jeans, is smiling and looking at the baby. They are standing in front of a window with light-colored curtains. A blue couch is visible in the background.

*Auto-Owners*  
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# Diamond Profile



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North Star Mutual

## PRESIDENT & CEO

Jeff Mauland, CPCU

## COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

Cottonwood, MN

## A.M. BEST RATING

"A+" (Superior)

## COMPANY WEBSITE

[www.northstarmutual.com](http://www.northstarmutual.com)

## North Star Mutual

### "A Personable Company – Keeping You on Course"

North Star Mutual is a Minnesota based regional insurance carrier specializing in Farm, Home, Auto and Small Business Insurance Products. North Star, formed in 1920, is celebrating a century of service this year. "One hundred years is quite an achievement," said Jeff Mauland, President and CEO, "and I am proud that our policyholders, agents, and employees who have contributed to the company's success over the years can all celebrate in this legacy." Today the company writes over \$450 million in premium and insures over 330,000 policyholders across eight states. All business is written through a network of more than 1,500 independent agency partners located throughout the operating territory.

*Minnesota Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers Association recognizes North Star Mutual Insurance as one of its Diamond Partners. MIIAB Diamond Partners are the highest level of sponsorship to our organization.*



*President & CEO  
Jeff Mauland, CPCU*

"Independent Agents have built our company and are vital to our success," said Jeff Mauland. "We are committed to our agency partners who are in the best position to meet the needs of their policyholders. We support the Minnesota Agent Association, not only for their work to provide many benefits to agent members, but also for their strong support and promotion of our industry."

Uniquely located in the small farming community of Cottonwood, North Star prides itself on its rural values and personable service. The company is the top Farm writer in Minnesota, working in partnership with township mutuals across the state. North Star has been a recognized leader in the agricultural insurance market and has had a historic emphasis on insuring farm and rural properties in the Upper Midwest.

"We have many excellent, long-term relationships with our agents and

are grateful for the outstanding support we have received over the years," said Jeff Mauland. "Our rural location provides us with a very experienced, dedicated and caring staff which, combined with user-friendly technology, are keys to our success. Agents appreciate and value our consistency in claims handling, product and policy service." Agents Meetings and Advisory Councils are also held each year to stay current on issues important to agents.

North Star is proud of its financial stability and strong commitment to serving agents and policyholders. The company is rated A+ Superior by A.M. Best and in 2019, was again selected as a Wards Top 50 Property/Casualty Insurance Company for the 15th consecutive year. North Star looks forward to its continued commitment of working closely with its agency partners in the years to come.



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# Top Ten Tips for Preventing Insurance Agent E&O Claims for 2020

By Aaron Simon

As an attorney whose primary practice is defending errors and omissions or “E&O” claims against insurance agents, I have seen many different types of insurance agent claims throughout the course of my career. My extensive experience in defending insurance agents has shown me the unique and various facts and circumstances under which these claims develop and arise. In addition, all the time I am asked by insurance agents: What are some of the best practices and procedures for preventing errors and omissions claims against insurance agents? Over the years I have put together a top ten list that I periodically review and publish. The following is my top ten list for preventing insurance agent E&O claims for 2020.

At the outset it should be noted that under Minnesota law and under normal circumstances insurance agents are only held to an order taker standard of care; that is under Minnesota law agents must follow the specific instructions of their insurance customers and act in good faith. Thus, failing to follow any of the suggested best practices below would not be a violation of the standard of care imposed on insurance agents under Minnesota law. It should also be noted that each insurance agent should develop the agent’s own personal risk management plan that is specifically tailored the agent’s business and customers.

## #1 Documentation! Documentation! Documentation!

It is a best practice to attempt to make sure that you document every interaction with your insurance customer, and make sure to provide detail in your documentation when important events occur. This is particularly important when there are offers of coverage to your insurance customer and declination of coverage by your insurance customer. Also, there should be detailed documentation about when coverages are discussed and what was discussed. An example would be: *“Discussed with insurance customer that \$2,000,000 umbrella did not include/cover UM/UIM coverage and insurance customer accepted and understood this.”* Documentation is one of the most important E&O prevention tools an insurance agent can use.

## #2 Checklists.

Another best practice tip is to use checklists and have your insurance customer sign off and date these checklists. You should develop specific checklists that are tailored to the type of insurance customer you sell insurance to. If you have different types of insurance customers, then you should have different types of checklists. These checklists do not need to be extensive or exhaustive. Often a one-page simple checklist will suffice. Overtime you should review and revise these checklists as appropriate.

continued on page 23

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ATTORNEYS AT LAW



Aaron Simon is a litigation and transactional law attorney with the law firm of Brownson Norby, PLLC. He is admitted to practice law in State and Federal Court in Minnesota and Wisconsin. A large focus of Mr. Simon’s practice involves defending insurance agents and agencies, handling insurance coverage matters, and representing insurance agencies and agents in contract and transactional matters. To learn more about Aaron, go to

<https://www.brownsonnorby.com/professionals/aaron-m-simon/>



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### **#3 Agency Management System.**

It is advised that you and your agency put in place a good electronic Agency Management System and use it regularly and consistently. Today most insurance agencies use an electronic Agency Management System of some sort. The problem I repeatedly see is the failure to regularly and consistently use this Agency Management System. At your agency you should have standard practices outlined (preferably documented in an agency manual) which specifically state how and when data is entered into your Agency Management System. It is also suggested that you have regular (typically annual) in-house training on the use of your Agency Management System.

### **#4 Follow-up Confirming Emails and Letters.**

It is highly recommended that you use follow-up and confirming emails (or letters) with your insurance customers. These communications should include statements like: *"This confirms we discussed the insurance on your home and vehicles last Friday and that no changes are needed to your insurance at this time. Attached/Enclosed are your insurance policy declaration sheets outlining the insurance coverages you currently have in place."* These communications should also include specifically telling your insurance customers in writing to review their insurance documents and to let you know if any changes are needed.

### **#5 Calendaring.**

It is advised that you calendar important dates in an outlook or other similar electronic or online calendar program. The information you calendar can include renewals, expirations, customer review meetings, etc... Keeping a detailed digital calendar will keep you organized and make sure you are providing the best service to your insurance customers. It will also remind you to perform some of the other best practices outlined in this guide. Also, should an E&O situation arise a detailed digital calendar can assist your attorney in putting together an accurate timeline to assist in the defense of the claim.

### **#6 No Claims Advocating.**

It is highly recommended that as an insurance agent you avoid getting involved in the claims process, and in particular making claim determinations after a loss. I understand this can be difficult, but it is important to remember that as an insurance agent your role is to sell and service insurance policies, not to get involved in the claims process (besides submitting claim information). If issues arise in the claims process and your insurance customer needs assistance in advocating with or against the insurance carrier then the insurance customer should retain a public adjuster or an attorney. If you do get involved in the claims process be extremely careful on what you say and what you do. For high value or complicated claims, it may be a good idea to speak with an E&O attorney (such as myself) before getting involved in the claims process. I have seen many insurance agent E&O claims develop as a result of the insurance agent getting too involved in the claims process.

### **#7 Unusual Circumstances and Customers.**

Be particularly careful around unique or unusual circumstances and situations. Last minute requests for coverage; strange hypotheticals being posed to you; and requests for backdating coverage should raise a Red Flag. When these types of situations arise, you should pay extra attention and make sure to create extensive documentation about the facts and circumstances surrounding these unique or unusual situations. Also, it is a good idea to identify potentially problematic insurance customers and take extra measures (such as more detailed documentation and more follow-up communications) to protect you against potential claims from these customers.

### **#8 Declaration Sheet Reviews.**

You should attempt to review every policy declaration page with your insurance customer. Make sure the information on the declaration page is accurate and matches the information on the application. A good idea here is to have your insurance customers sign off and date each declaration page. If there are questions about information on the declaration sheets, make sure answers are provided to your insurance customer, either from yourself or the carrier. It is important that your insurance customer understands what is listed on the declaration sheet and the coverage that is being provided as stated on the declaration sheet.

### **#9 Customer Reviews.**

You should perform regular thorough reviews with your insurance customers. These reviews should be in-person if possible. For commercial insurance customers these reviews should typically be at least annually, and for more complex commercial insurance customers probably quarterly or even monthly. For personal insurance customers this can be



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every couple of years, as long as correspondence (either mail or email) is going out with every renewal stating that the insurance customer should review the customer's insurance documents and let you know if any changes are needed.

### #10 No Assumptions.

Do not make assumptions about what your customers want or need; ask them. If you are uncertain as to what your insurance customer wants, make sure to clarify this with your insurance customer. When you become aware of changes in the situation or circumstance of your insurance customer, reach out to your insurance customer and inquire. It never hurts to ask, and this can potentially lead to a sales opportunity for you. This will also show that you care about what is going on with your insurance customers.

As a final thought do not think that you will never be sued or that a claim will never be made against you or your agency. In this vein it is always a good idea to make sure you have the proper limits in place for your E&O insurance and the right deductible. A good general rule of thumb is that at a minimum you should probably have at least the same amount of E&O coverage in place as the highest limit policy you sell. Another important point here is that if you have a cost of defense deductible and you get sued or a claim is made against you, even in a weak and seemingly baseless claim, you will spend thousands of dollars in defense costs out of your own pocket getting rid and attempting to resolve these claims.

If you have questions or concerns about insurance agent E&O matters or insurance agent E&O insurance please feel free to contact me at [asimon@brownsonnorby.com](mailto:asimon@brownsonnorby.com) or 612-315-6327.

***Please note the information provided in this article is generalized information, should not be considered legal advice, and should not be automatically construed to apply to any specific situation.***



## Thank YOU!

**THANKS** 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 this year!

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# EMBRACE OR REPLACE

A HIGH LEVEL LOOK AT THE INSURTECH ECOSYSTEM

## TECHNOLOGIES

# TO EMBRACE

### 1. Agency Management System

Options: Applied, Vertafore, Internet of Insurance, Bold Penguin, Broker Buddha, Veruna, Nexsure, Agency Matrix, Hawksoft, Xanatek, Insurance Technology Corporation (ITC), QQCatalyst, EZLynx, PartnerXE

### 2. Comparative Rater

Options: EZ lynx, Applied Rater, PL Rater, QQ WebRater

### 3. Website

Options: Agency Tsunami, Forge 3, Agency Revolution, Alicor Solutions, Advisor Evolved

### 4. E-signature

Options: DocuSign, Adobe Sign, OneSpan Sign, SignNow, InsureSign

### 5. Security and Compliance

Options: Archway, Midwest IT, ASG Information Technologies

### 6. Artificial Intelligence/ Chatbot

Options: ProNavigator, Friendly Agent Bot, Elafris, SPIXII, LeO, PredictiveBi, Drift

### 7. Platform

Options: Internet of Insurance, Insurance Technology Corporation, Bold Penguin, RiskMatch, Tarmika, CoverWallet

### 8. Customer Engagement

Options: Bomb Bomb, Mail Chimp, Zywave, Client Desk, Bolt X, Ebix, Levitate, Denim, TrustedChoice.com, Rocket Referrals, Social Survey, GrassHopper (VoIP), InsuranceDrip, Neilson Marketing Services, EverQuote

### 9. Data and Analytics

Options: Guidewire, xtLytics, SAS, Carpe Data, RiskAPP, IntellAgents, Neon, Roost Home Telematics

### 10. Outsourcing

Options: ResourcePro, WHAVE, Virtual Insurance Pro

### 11. Other

Options: DAIS, Indio, Simply Easier Accord Forms







## TECHNOLOGIES TRYING TO

# REPLACE YOU

### 1) DIGITAL EXPERIENCE.

Examples: Lemonade, Slice, Embroker, Insureon, Leaselock, Pie Insurance, Knip, Cake Insure

### 2) MICRO INSURANCE.

Examples: Trov, Verifly, Simpleurance, Rooset Renters, Thimble

### 3) PEER-TO-PEER.

Examples: Friendsurance, Darwininsurance, Lemonade, insPeer, Givesurance,

### 4) USAGE-BASED INSURANCE (UBI).

Examples: Metromile, Dinghy, Slice

### 5) SOCIAL COMMUNITIES.

Examples: Carrot, Swoop, Friendsurance,

### 6) COMPARISON SHOPPERS.

Examples: Insurify, Coverhound, Bunker, Hippo Insurance, The Zebra, EverQuote, Cover, Goji, Clearurance, Business Comparison

### 7) COVERAGE CONFIGURATION AND DATA-BASED MODELS.

Examples: Allianz1, Digital Fineprint, Root Insurance, Alithias, PPXtec

### 8) ADVICE ENGINES.

Examples: Policy Genius, InsureScope

### 9) Artificial Intelligence.

Examples: SPIXII, Lemonade, Insurify, Untangler, Ladder

### 10) CLAIMS.

Examples: Dropin, snapsheet, Claim Di, Tractable



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# Diamond Profile



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**FEATURED PARTNER**  
IMT Insurance

**PRESIDENT & CEO**  
Sean Kennedy, FCAS,  
MAAA, CPCU

**COMPANY HOME OFFICE**  
West Des Moines, IA

**AM BEST RATING**  
A (Excellent)

**WEBSITE**  
imtins.com



*IMT Insurance President & CEO  
Sean Kennedy, FCAS, MAAA, CPCU*

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MIDWEST REGIONAL  
CARRIER THAT VALUES  
OUR RELATIONSHIPS  
WITH INDEPENDENT  
INSURANCE AGENTS.**

#### **PRODUCT LINES**

IMT Insurance offers personal and commercial insurance products to help protect families, homes and businesses. We strive to offer great insurance products and exceptional service for a competitive price. These products include car insurance, home insurance, business insurance, farm liability, umbrella insurance and surety/fidelity bonds.

#### **INDEPENDENT AGENTS**

People buy their insurance from independent agents

because they know them, like them, and trust them. That is exactly the reason independent agents do business with IMT. We use our strong partnership with Independent Agencies to meet and exceed the needs of our personal and commercial lines clients.

#### **TECHNOLOGY IS OUR STRONG SUIT**

Technology is a vital part of our business at IMT and we have won awards for our innovative technology. We develop and maintain our own policy systems – all from our home office. Our systems are company-tested and agent-approved. In addition, we are committed to helping our agents succeed with resources and content for social media, video and digital advertising.

#### **ABOUT IMT**

IMT is proud of our heritage and will never forget where our roots are firmly planted. Locally run from our home office in West Des Moines, Iowa, IMT has been a Midwest company since it was founded in Wadena, Iowa in 1884. That's more than 130 years!

Today, IMT continues to offer the strong line of personal and commercial insurance products for which it has always been known through Independent Agents throughout our six-state territory – Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

For more information about IMT Insurance, visit [imtins.com](http://imtins.com).

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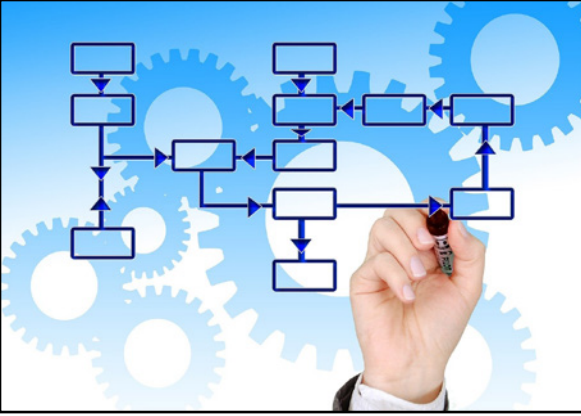
A company is a business owner's pride and joy. Help maximize coverage and protect it with business insurance from the Worry Free company — IMT Insurance.

Learn how you can represent IMT Insurance at [imtins.com/contact](https://imtins.com/contact).

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# The **Value** of Agency-Centric Workflows

by **Mallory Cornell**

In my role of Vice President of the IIAW, I enjoy being the go-to resource for agency operational questions. I regularly have the great opportunity to conduct Operational Improvement Reviews and also lead E&O Risk Management classes for independent agencies across Wisconsin and other states. These exercises are two of the ways in which we collect valuable feedback on the needs of agencies and then in turn provide tips, tools, resources and premium credits to the agencies. I simply cannot express how much I enjoy working on-site with the agency professionals who keep the IA channel strong.

Oftentimes, carriers or other agents will ask me, "What's the number one pain point you hear from agencies when you're in their offices?". I cover a wide variety of topics and address challenges within their workflows and most often the conversation comes back to the headaches agency staff experience when it comes to adhering to the varying carrier requirements. There are several areas that fall under this broad category. It can be everything from understanding binding authority and underwriting guidelines to the individual login for each different carrier website.

Until now, this concern and frustration that I was hearing from agency employees was one I could do very little about. However, that is all about to change.

It is important to understand that these disjointed workflows are not simply a daily headache for agency staff – they are an exposure. Consider just some of the ways in which inefficiencies create frustration: loss of revenue per employee, lowered level of customer service provided and disruption in agency workflows. When these inefficiencies arise, they breed behaviors which become E&O exposures and in some cases, claims. Frustration could amount to poor file documentation. Customer service suffers when quotes are not obtained from various carriers because of time constraints. Agency workflows that are disrupted become hurdles for an agency trying to establish invariable practices; a key defense mechanism for E&O claims. Quite simply put, the process of marketing or re-marketing an account is a sensitive subject to approach with both personal lines and commercial lines teams.

But now there is a solution; the Internet of Insurance. The efficiencies and E&O risk mitigation that will come from implementing technology that connects workflows onto a single platform for the agency is truly a game-changer.

As rewarding as it has been for me to go into an agency and work directly with the personnel, having a resource that will eliminate the pain points of multiple carrier workflows will make this process even more enjoyable. The Internet of Insurance continues to advance in capabilities every week and the focus on specific agency pain point should be capturing the attention of all agency owners.

From an E&O standpoint, having standardized coverage options to offer, entering client information in a single location, submitting to various carriers with just the click of a button and capturing carrier conversations all at once are E&O mitigation activities as well as enhancements to the customer experience. This can only be achieved when working with a technology company that is putting the agency first. The Internet of Insurance, powered by DAIS, is not only putting the agency first, but in a position to succeed!

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR:**

*Mallory Cornell is Vice President of the Independent Insurance Agents of Wisconsin and leads the IIAW's Risk Management consulting practice. She has worked with hundreds of agencies across the United States.*



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# Diamond Profile



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## **FEATURED PARTNER**

Liberty Mutual Insurance

## **AVP, REGION DIRECTOR**

Laura J. Hays

## **BRANCH OFFICES**

Minnetonka, Minneapolis

## **AM BEST RATING**

"A" (Excellent)

## **WEBSITE**

[business.libertymutualgroup.com](http://business.libertymutualgroup.com)



*Liberty Mutual AVP, Region Director  
**Laura J. Hays, CIC***

## **Your Insurance Experts**

Every business is different, so their insurance coverages should be, too. That's why we take the time to learn about your business — because the better we understand it, the better we protect it. At Liberty Mutual Insurance, we have the experience and expertise to help safeguard your business and employees — and that is just what we've done since 1912. As the #1 preferred property and casualty business insurance provider\* with more than 50,000 employees in over 800 offices around the world, we have broad capabilities and the local resources to support you. Get started by learning about what coverages we have for your industry.

## **Understanding Your Business**

Through our network of independent agents, brokers, and benefits consultants, we offer a flexible, multi-line range of coverages designed to meet the needs of your business — regardless of size or industry. With expertise throughout our organization, from risk control to underwriting to claims, our team of insurance professionals understands and knows your specific industry.

## **Supporting Your Business**

Our goal is to help you create a safe work environment, and in the event of a claim, help you get back to business. We have risk control specialists available via phone, online,

or in person to advise on the right solutions for your unique business. However, we realize that accidents happen, and when you do file a claim, our experienced professionals will work to quickly and fairly resolve it. Our teams are skilled in every part of the claims process and have the training, technology, and resources to get you the best possible outcome.

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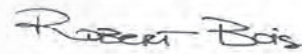


# AGENTS OF *Whatever's next*

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Vehicle insurance is provided by Progressive Casualty Ins. Co. & affiliates. Home and renters policies are provided and serviced by affiliated and third-party insurers who are solely responsible for claims. Prices, coverages, and privacy policies vary among these insurers.



# E&O Q&A

By Mary LaPorte, CPCU, CIC, LIC, CPIA

## Agent's questions about Errors and Omissions, and how E&O losses can be prevented.

**Q:** We have several commercial customers who like to have a "blank" Certificate of Insurance to keep in their work proposals to demonstrate that they are adequately insured. Typically we give them a Certificate which shows the holder as "FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY." We have other customers who may travel, such as to business expos, and need to produce a Certificate on a weekend or on short notice. Although we don't do this as often, we will give them a Certificate with a blank field for the Certificate holder, which they fill out and send us a copy the following day. We have had some discussion in the office as to whether this is OK or not. From an E&O perspective, is there any harm in this?

**Samantha, Arizona**

**A:** Samantha, I'm so glad you asked about this. As a matter of fact, I get this question more than you might expect. The more information you know about the proper use of Certificates of Insurance, the better prepared you are to handle these situations.

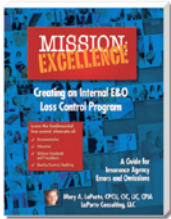
Issuing a Certificate with a blank Certificate holder field is a very bad idea and creates an E&O exposure for your agency. First, it increases the chance of fraud. There is nothing to prevent someone from altering all or some of the information. Another reason is that the Certificate is only good on the date it is issued. Your signature on the Certificate verifies that on that date, the coverage stated is in force. It is really not a representation of any coverage that may or may not exist in the future.

Issuing a Certificate with a "For Informational Purposes Only" is also a practice that should be avoided as well as those issued showing the named insured as the Certificate holder. Again, your signature affirms that on that particular date, specific coverage was in force. You have no control over who your customer furnishes a copy or shares this information, but you can control what you do know, and only as it applies to coverage at the time of your signature.

Last, but certainly not least, there are rules that apply to your use of Certificates of Insurance. This is included in your licensing agreement with ACORD. The ACORD rules indicate that only a valid Certificate holder be listed in the Certificate Holder field. You may also be in violation of your state statutes regarding the issuance of Certificates if you enter anything in that field other than the Certificate holder name and address.

Your customers should be educated about the proper use of Certificates. There are other ways you can suggest your customers demonstrate coverage to a prospective future Certificate holder. They could include a summary of coverage (carrier, agent, policy number, limits) and state: "A Certificate of Insurance will be furnished upon receipt of a signed contract."

An educated customer will help educate others with whom they do business. This helps set your customer apart for others as being more professional, it helps solidify your relationship with your customer, and establishes you as a knowledgeable authority in this area.



See Mary's new book: "**Mission: EXCELLENCE – Creating an Internal E&O Loss Control Program**"

For more information, go to Mary's website at [www.lpinsuranceconsult.com](http://www.lpinsuranceconsult.com)

*Mary LaPorte is a consultant and educator with a strong background in Errors & Omissions loss prevention. Forward your E&O questions to [marylp@lpinsuranceconsult.com](mailto:marylp@lpinsuranceconsult.com)  
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**DENNIS KING**  
Risk Improvement Specialist  
EMC Minneapolis Branch

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## Big "I" Professional Liability and Swiss Re Corporate Solutions Announce Risk Management Improvements to Help Your Agency

*Revised credit structure features shorter class time, increased credits up to 30 percent.*

By Richard Lund, Senior Underwriter and Vice President, Swiss Re Corporate Solutions

Swiss Re Corporate Solutions and IIABA have worked together for more than 30 years to provide the premier insurance agents errors and omissions program in the marketplace. A cornerstone of the program has been to provide comprehensive risk management tools to help agencies avoid an E&O claim.

Beginning in the 1970's, Swiss Re's predecessor Employers Reinsurance Company developed its first risk management (then called "loss control") seminar with an 8-page outline and more than 30 pages of surveys, coverage checklists, and examples of the potential errors, omissions and claims that an insurance agent could be subject to. As time progressed, this initial effort has grown to the 15 module "Meeting the Challenge of Change," consisting of over 300 pages of materials, examples, sample letters, checklists and many other risk management resources to help you and your agency avoid an E&O claim.

The next evolution of Swiss Re risk management resources was the creation of the E&O Happens Risk Management website, [www.iiaba.net/EOHappens](http://www.iiaba.net/EOHappens), which contains numerous articles, examples, sample forms and letters, webinars, and other important materials and resources that can help prevent insurance agents from becoming an E&O statistic.

A key to the success of the Big "I" Professional Liability program has been to reward those agencies that take advantage of these risk management resources by applying a premium discount to those who include their staff in risk management courses. Swiss Re has been able to prove that there is a direct correlation between attending a risk management course and reducing E&O claims.

Until now, the credit has been limited to 10% of the total E&O insurance premium. Swiss Re Corporate Solutions and IIABA are pleased to announce that with the development of additional risk management resources, the total premium credits can be increased up to 30% of your agency's insurance premium. Effective 1/1/2020, policyholders can take advantage of these additional risk management resources:

10% Attendance at a qualifying Risk Management course

5% At least 50% of agency staff Attendance at a qualifying Risk Management\* course

5% Using coverage checklists\*

5% Agency Website Improvement review by a qualified auditor\*

\*(Risk management course attendance is required for application of the other credits. Maximum additional credit is 10% for a total of 20%)

10% Agency Improvement review by a qualified auditor

Understanding that the key to avoiding E&O claims is to have more risk management in the hands of more people, and that the keys to learning have changed since the 1980's, the requirements are being simplified:

- The Risk Management Course reduced to 3 hours from 6
- Having a claim will no longer result in the loss of the risk management credits
- the number of staff required to attend has been simplified to better reflect agency makeup
- In some states, a written exam may be substituted for attendance at a risk management course

Why change the risk management credit now? It's simple: data proves that risk management works! The new risk management program structure enables more people to have better access to risk management materials, which makes your agency operate better and helps you avoid E&O claims.

To learn more about how to take advantage of risk management credits, contact MIIAB's E&O Hotline at 1-800-550-9891

Not yet part of the Big "I" Professional Liability program, the strongest and most stable agents E&O program in the nation? We would love to tell you more. We serve agencies of all sizes, from a one-person shop to an alliance group. Contact MIIAB's E&O Hotline at 1-800-550-9891

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# Capitol Notes



THE LEGISLATIVE AND POLITICAL NEWSLETTER OF THE  
MN INDEPENDENT INSURANCE AGENTS & BROKERS ASSOCIATION

## 2020 MN Session Preview

At noon on Tuesday, February 11, the MN Legislature gavelled in the 2020 legislative session. With all 201 legislative seats up for election in November, Republicans and DFLers are eager to promote their agendas and demonstrate to Minnesota voters why their party should control the Legislature in 2021.

Raising the stakes this session is the fact that the next Legislature will redraw the legislative and congressional district boundaries based on the results of the 2020 US Census. Continued population shifts to the sunbelt, could very well put one of Minnesota's eight congressional seats at risk of being eliminated. Majority control of the Legislature in 2021 will provide the controlling political party an opportunity to consolidate power for the next decade.

The DFL House and the Republican controlled Senate have vastly different ideas about what Minnesota voters want. Nowhere is this clearer than the caucus' plans for the forecasted \$1.3 billion surplus. Senate Republicans believe a surplus is evidence that taxes are too high and the surplus should be returned to taxpayers. The House DFL would like to spend the surplus on enhancing early childhood education and childcare care affordability.

Combine those differences with only a month until the first legislative deadline and there is not much time for hammering out differences or compromise. To that effect, legislative leaders and committee chairs are advising that there will not be committee time devoted to controversial, non-priority bills.

One note-worthy change heading into the 2020 session is that the Senate DFL has a new minority leader, Senator Susan Kent (DFL-Woodbury). Kent replaces long-time caucus Leader, Tom Bakk (DFL-Cook). After a six-hour meeting, Kent is rumored to have defeated Bakk by only one vote. The replacement of Bakk, who hails from MN's Iron Range, shifts control of the party to the more progressive Senators from the Twin Cities metro area.

Here is a quick run through of some of the early legislative issues of interest to MIIAB members.

## Cybersecurity

One of the Department of Commerce's (DOC) top priorities this year is the enactment of the NAIC's Insurance Data Security Model Law. The Model Law requires producers and insurance companies to implement a cybersecurity plan and to report and investigate a cybersecurity breach. While well-intentioned, many of the Model law's requirements are extremely onerous especially for small agencies (the designation of an information security officer, for example) and other requirements are so vague as that it is not clear how agencies would even comply. The Model does include an exemption for small agencies, but that exemption is far too limited as it applies only to agencies with 10 or fewer employees, including independent contractors.

Recognizing that MIIAB support is critical to the passage of the Model in MN, the DOC sought our input on the Model. As a result, we spent over an hour with DOC staff discussing our concerns and possible solutions with a focus on expanding the small entity exemption. We are currently waiting to see the DOC proposed revisions based on our input.

Interestingly, one of the reasons that the DOC is so interested in this Model this year, is that the US Treasury admonished that NAIC that if the states did not enact the Model by 2022, Congress would take action and preempt the states.

continued on page 47

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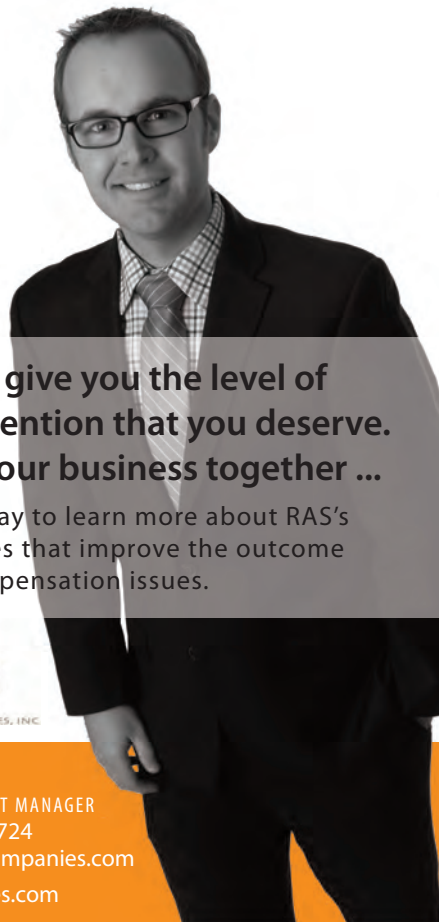
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## Social Security Income Tax

A top Republican priority this session is putting the budget surplus back into the pockets of seniors by fully exempting SSI income from state taxes. Republicans acknowledge the exemption's steep price tag but believe the change would entice seniors to stay in MN longer. The House DFL feels this is another Republican attempt to help the wealthy and while Governor Walz seems to agree conceptually, he thinks the effort should be saved for a budget year (2021).

## Tax Reform for Small Businesses and Farmers (Section 179 Expensing)

In 2019, Minnesota conformed its tax law to numerous elements of the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. Minnesota did not, however, adopt many of the expensing provisions including section 179. Section 179 of the IRS tax code allows businesses to deduct the full purchase price of qualifying equipment and/or software purchased or financed during the tax year. That means that if an agency buys (or lease) a piece of qualifying equipment, the agency can deduct the full purchase price from its gross income. As a result, of excluding Section 179 from last year's conformity bill, Minnesota only allows for a fraction of investments to be immediately expensed, thus putting local small businesses and farmers at a disadvantage. The good news is all four Legislative Leaders and the Governor have expressed initial interest in making this change in 2020.

## Affinity Discounts

The DOC's interpretation of a 2017 law on affinity group discounts has led many insurance companies to eliminate their affinity programs. MIIAB has been actively engaged in discussions with the DOC to find a consensus around restoring these discounts. Negotiations are moving in a positive direction and we are hopeful that there will be legislation this session that will clarify the rules and allow insurance companies to restore and continue to offer these discounts.

## Commissioner Kelley's Confirmation

The Republican Senate will begin to hold confirmation hearings on Walz's cabinet appointees this session. The confirmation process begins in the committee with the appropriate subject matter jurisdiction. In Kelley's case, his confirmation would begin in the Senate Commerce Committee. After a hearing, the committee makes a recommendation to confirm or not confirm to the full Senate. The committee may also send the confirmation to the floor with no recommendation.

Commissioner Kelley is one of the Commissioners rumored to be facing a tougher confirmation process. Republican Senators have taken issue with the DOC's decision to continue a lawsuit challenging the approval of a new pipeline in outstate MN and Senators also have continuing concerns with the DOC's market conduct division. In addition, when Kelley was a state senator, his committee led the effort to take down former Republican Governor Pawlenty's Education Commissioner.

## Health Insurance

With the debate over a state-run health insurance program momentarily diffused by the 2019 creation of the Blue-Ribbon Commission on Health and Human Services, the Legislature is focusing on prescription drug costs. Insulin affordability is bi-partisan priority as is the search for a more comprehensive approach to make prescription drugs more affordable for all. The Senate Republicans are looking at reimportation and the House DFL is looking to the manufacturers and health insurers. We can expect many hours of hearings on the various proposals, but with the possible exception of the insulin bill, it is not clear that much will be accomplished this session.



**Robyn Rowen, J.D.**  
**MIAB Legislative/Regulatory Counsel and Lobbyist**



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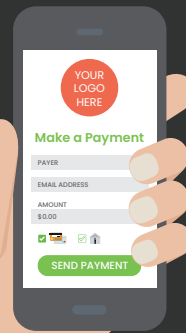
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MN Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers Association

## Please select Seminar date

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- ~~3/4 - 3/6/20 Maple Grove~~ Commercial Casualty **Waitlist**
- 4/8 - 4/10/20 Maple Grove** Life & Health
- 5/13 - 5/15/20 Maple Grove** Agency Management
- 6/10 - 6/11/20 Alexandria** \*Ruble Graduate Seminar
- 8/12 - 8/14/20 Maple Grove** Commercial Property
- 9/16 - 9/17/20 Edina** \*Ruble Graduate Seminar
- 10/7 - 10/9/20 Maple Grove** Commercial Multiline
- 10/21 - 10/22/20 Maple Grove** \*Ruble Graduate Seminar
- 11/11 - 11/13/20 Maple Grove** Personal Lines

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Name of Attendee MN Insurance License # DOB Designations

Agency/Company Phone Email

Address City State Zip

Return to: MIIAB, 15490 101st Ave N, Suite 100, Maple Grove, MN 55369 P: 763.235.6460 F: 763.235.6461 E: miaa@miaa.org





# 2020 MIIAB CISR Program Schedule



MN Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers Association

Please select Seminar date - These courses have been approved by the MN Commissioner of Commerce for 7 hours of Insurance continuing education

- 1/8/20 - Edina - Personal Residential
- 1/14/20 - Moorhead - Commercial Casualty II
- 1/15/20 - St. Cloud - Personal Residential
- 2/13/20 - Maple Grove - Personal Lines Miscellaneous
- 2/18/20 - Rochester - Commercial Property
- 2/25/20 - Woodbury - Commercial Casualty II
- 3/11/20 - Maple Grove - Personal Residential
- 3/24/20 - Mankato - Agency Operations
- 4/1/20 - Duluth - Personal Auto
- 4/7/20 - Maple Grove - Life & Health Essentials
- 4/23/20 - Baxter - Commercial Casualty I
- 5/12/20 - Willmar - Agency Operations
- 5/19/20 - Edina - Commercial Casualty I
- 6/3/20 - St. Cloud - Personal Lines Miscellaneous
- 6/18/20 - Maple Grove - Personal Auto
- 6/23/20 - Lake Elmo - Elements of Risk Management
- 7/9/20 - Maple Grove - Elements of Risk Management
- 7/14/20 - Alexandria - Personal Lines Miscellaneous
- 7/16/20 - Edina - \*Dynamics of Service
- 7/21/20 - Bemidji - Personal Auto
- 8/4/20 - Duluth - Agency Operations
- 8/20/20 - Mankato - Personal Residential
- 8/25/20 - St. Cloud - Commercial Property
- 9/22/20 - Edina - Personal Lines Miscellaneous
- 10/1/20 - Duluth - \*Dynamics of Service
- 10/13/20 - Woodbury - Agency Operations
- 10/27/20 - Maple Grove - Commercial Property
- 11/17/20 - Edina - Personal Auto
- 12/15/20 - Maple Grove - Commercial Casualty II

**\*Dynamics of Service is good for CE and updating your designation, not for achieving your designation.**

**Dues-paid CISRs may receive up to two years' update credit for full attendance at any James K. Ruble Graduate Seminar.**

In accordance with Title III of the American with Disabilities Act, we invite all registrants to advise us of any disability and any request for accommodation to that disability. Please submit your request as far as possible in advance of the program you wish to attend.

**Cancellation Policy: Full refund or transfer will be granted if request is received in writing within 7 days prior to the seminar. Requests received after that date will incur a \$35.00 fee. No refund/transfer will be granted for no shows.**

## Method of Payment

- Check Enclosed (Payable to MIIAB)
- Please Invoice

**Due to cyber security concerns MIIAB will no longer take credit card information in writing or over the phone. To pay by credit card please use our secure Online Registration process through our Education Calendar on our website.**

<https://www.miaa.org/Education/Pages/Calendar/default.aspx>

- Alexandria** - Holiday Inn  
5637 Highway 29 S, Alexandria, MN 56308
- Baxter** - Arrowwood Lodge at Brainerd Lakes  
6967 Lake Forest Road, Baxter, MN 56425
- Bemidji** - Hampton Inn & Suites  
1019 Paul Bunyan Drive, Bemidji MN 56601
- Duluth** - Holiday Inn and Suites  
200 West First St, Duluth, MN 55802
- Edina** - Western National  
4700 West 77th St, Edina, MN 55435
- Lake Elmo** - Auto Owners Ins. Company  
8574 Eagle Point Circle, Lake Elmo, MN 55042
- Mankato** - Country Inn & Suites  
1900 Premier Drive, Mankato, MN 56001
- Maple Grove** - MIIAB  
15490 101st Ave N, Maple Grove, MN 55369
- Moorhead** - Courtyard by Marriott  
1080 28th Ave S, Moorhead, MN 56560
- Rochester** - Courtyard by Marriott  
161 13th Ave SW, Rochester, MN 55902
- St. Cloud** - Best Western Kelly Inn  
100 4th Ave S, St. Cloud, MN 56301
- Willmar** - Willmar Conference Center  
240 23rd Street SE, Willmar, MN 56201
- Woodbury** - ICC Restoration Company  
451 Commerce Dr #800, Woodbury, MN 55125

| Cost     | Seminar             | Time                               |
|----------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| \$180.00 | CISR Seminar        | 8:00am-3:45pm<br>Test: 4:15-5:15pm |
| \$180.00 | Dynamics of Service | 8:00am-4:00pm                      |

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Name of Attendee \_\_\_\_\_ MN Insurance License # \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Designations \_\_\_\_\_

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Agency/Company \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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[www.miaa.org](http://www.miaa.org)



# NEW FOR 2020 E&O SEMINARS NOW 3 HOURS

## New Simplified Westport E&O Requirements

Agencies that attend this seminar will receive a **10% loss control credit** on their Westport E&O Premium. Once an agency attends the seminar the 10% credit will apply for 2 years

Number of agency staff required to attend is bases upon staff size

| Staff Size | Required to attend                 |
|------------|------------------------------------|
| 1-4        | 1                                  |
| 5-11       | 3                                  |
| 12+        | 25% of Staff (max of 15 attendees) |

*\* Your agency can recieve an additional 5% credit if 50% of your agency attend.*

CONTACT OUR **E&O HOTLINE AT 800-550-9891**  
TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE **NEW** ADDITIONAL  
PREMIUM CREDITS AVAILABLE

## Method of Payment

**Cost: \$80.00** MIIAB Member **OR \$95.00** Non-Member

- Check Enclosed (Payable to MIIAB)       Please Invoice

Due to cyber security concerns MIIAB will no longer take credit card information in writing or over the phone. To pay by credit card please use our secure Online Registration process through our Education Calendar on our website.

<https://www.miia.org/Education/Pages/Calendar/default.aspx>

## Please Check Location

- 2/11/20 - Maple Grove** 8:30am-11:30am  
*E&O: Road Map to Policy Analysis*  
MIIAB  
15490 101st Avenue North  
Maple Grove MN 55369
- 5/7/20 - St. Paul** 8:30am-11:30am  
*Commercial Liability Coverage Gaps and How To Fill Them*  
ICC Restoration Company  
451 Commerce Dr #800  
Woodbury, MN 55125
- 8/5/20 - Edina** 8:30am-11:30am  
*Commercial Liability Coverage Gaps and How To Fill Them*  
Western National  
4700 West 77th Street  
Edina MN 55435
- 10/14/20 - St. Cloud** 8:30am-11:30am  
*E&O: Road Map to Policy Analysis*  
Best Western Kelly Inn  
100 4th Ave S  
St. Cloud MN 56301

**These courses have been approved by the MN Commissioner of Commerce for 3 hours of Insurance continuing education.**

**Cancellation Policy: Full refund or transfer will be granted if request is received in writing within 7 days prior to the seminar. Requests received after that date will incur a \$35.00 fee. No refund/transfer will be granted for no shows.**

*In accordance with Title III of the American with Disabilities Act, we invite all registrants to advise us of any disability and any request for accommodation to that disability. Please submit your request as far as possible in advance of the program you wish to attend.*

Name of Attendee \_\_\_\_\_ MN Insurance License # \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Designations \_\_\_\_\_

Agency/Company \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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# Thank You



MN Independent Insurance  
Agents & Brokers Association

## to our 2020 MIIAB Partners

### DIAMOND



### PLATINUM



### GOLD

Encompass Insurance Company  
Foremost Insurance Group  
NAU Country Insurance

Northern States Agency  
Risk Administration Services  
RPS

### SILVER

Accident Fund  
AmTrust North America  
Badger Mutual Insurance  
Berkshire Hathaway GUARD Insurance  
Brownson Norby, PLLC  
Burns & Wilcox  
Chubb Group  
CNA Insurance  
ENCOVA  
ePayPolicy  
Erickson-Larsen, Inc.  
FIRST Insurance Funding

Great Northwest Insurance Company  
ICC Restoration & Cleaning Services  
ICW Group Insurance Companies  
IFC National Marketing, Inc.  
Imperial PFS  
Kemper Personal Insurance  
Midwest Family Mutual  
MN Workers Comp Insurers Association  
Philadelphia Insurance Companies  
Premco Financial Corporation  
Prime Insurance Company  
R-T Specialty, LLC.

ServiceMaster & Superior Construction  
Society Insurance  
State Auto Companies  
Sunbelt Business Advisors  
The Hanover Insurance Group  
Tomsche, Sonnesyn & Tomsche, PA  
Travelers Companies, Inc.  
United Fire Group  
Universal Property & Casualty  
Westfield Insurance  
Workers Compensation Specialist