

IIABNJ - Retail Agents to Wholesalers

Top Things That Would Help Retail Agents When Placing Business with Surplus Lines Brokers

- Use Technology As Much As Possible
 - Use E Mails instead of Faxes for communications but agents need acknowledgements of receipt from surplus lines broker to confirm binding in place and to confirm receipt of applications (less costly) (also list staff member who will be handling for future correspondence)
 - Send policies and quotes by e mail
 - Have copies of forms on website for retail agents to review
 - Online Quotation System would be extremely worthwhile when available
- Renewal process
 - Use direct bill for personal lines
 - Begin renewal process 60 days in advance with notice to retail agent of what is needed to provide quotation
 - Quote commercial lines 30 days in advance based upon current application or a simplified renewal application as opposed to full applications each year (understanding that if exposure has changed, that renewal quote may need revision or an endorsement may need to be issued)
- Billing/Payments/Commissions
 - On agency bill policies, bill the retail agent by statement monthly so only one check needs to be issued; if monthly statement not available, list due date clearly and provide for enough time to collect and submit premium
 - Show retail agent commission percentage with quotations and policies for their billing process; also be sure to clearly indicate fees and taxes so insured can be advised
 - Consider negotiating higher commissions for retail agents who provide substantial business and/or who regularly provide fully completed submissions which keeps costs down
 - Availability of other than full annual premium or premium finance would be beneficial to agents and many insureds
- Applications/Quoting/Loss Runs
 - Supply loss runs in a timely manner
 - Develop a supplemental application that can be used for all companies as opposed to retail agent/insured having to prepare several applications on the same risk
 - Automatically include optional key coverages in quote with breakdown of cost, such as blanket additional insured, per project aggregate, etc. (try to enhance the coverage and develop more premium while helping your retail agent offer a better product)
 - Include relevant exclusions, limitations on quotations and provide access to full forms on website for retail agent to provide insured/prospect
 - If wholesaler must refer to company for binder, advise retail agent how much advance time will be necessary to bind coverage
 - Advise if price is firm or may be negotiable if insured is shopping other quotations
 - Advise retail agent what companies are being used for quoting, so applications are not submitted to those same companies elsewhere; indicate the normal length of time that it will take to get quote back from that company

- Establish a process for the order of quoting on urgent/priority submissions received; sometimes quotes needed in advance and cannot be received a day or two before effective date
- In Force Business
 - E Mail endorsements in a timely manner
 - E Mail requests for information and allow sufficient time for agent to contact insured and obtain response (7 days not always possible to obtain information from insured)
- Marketing/Expertise
 - Provide monthly marketing e mails as opposed to every few days
 - Wholesalers who can give insight into the policy forms and coverages, using their expertise on the markets they represent, are highly regarded by retail agents