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Volume 2, Issue 2 | Winter 2021

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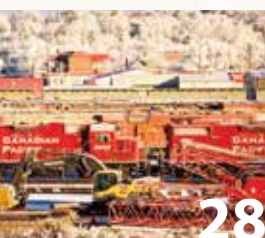


IN THIS ISSUE



Blown away

As the final calendar page turned on the headache that was 2020, many of us found ourselves embracing the first inklings of hope that had surfaced in quite some time. But Mother Nature always has a way of putting us back in our place. And, on January 13, she teamed up with her good friend Jack Frost to remind us that 2021 and 2020 are indeed very harsh cousins.



Ready for a rebound?

Supply chain issues, travel restrictions, COVID-19 immunization progress, and a myriad of other factors will all have unique impact on the prosperity of individual sectors of Saskatchewan's economy over the next year. What, though, are the experts forecasting? We reached out to five of the best and brightest to ask their predictions and insights for 2021.



Winter Advocacy Report

IBAS President & CEO Derek Lothian shares his thoughts on the importance of the association's ongoing advocacy efforts, and provides an update on the files IBAS is advancing on behalf of its members — from best terms pricing and SGI motor licence issuing negotiations to the hardened commercial market.

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New year, new optimism

By Dave Pettigrew, President & CEO, Harvard Western Insurance



There is no other way to put it: *2020 sucked*. And I, for one, could not be happier to see it in the rear-view mirror. Yes, we are still months away from a return to normal (whatever 'normal' will look like), but the year that brought us COVID, social distancing, and Zoom calls is over, and that alone is reason for celebration.

Cynicism aside, the past 12 months *have* truly been transformative for the insurance industry in Saskatchewan. The adoption of new technologies has accelerated, both within and between brokerages and carriers. Customers have been driven increasingly towards digital service options. Traditional workforce dynamics have been uprooted. And our members have made record investments in training and licensing up staff. These will have a lasting impact on our businesses well beyond the lifting of public health restrictions.

For IBAS, the disruption caused by the pandemic has been equally as consequential. We were forced to cancel numerous events, transition heavily towards online engagement, and navigate a litany of advocacy issues we didn't even know existed prior to last March. Through it all, however, IBAS demonstrated just how vital the association is to Saskatchewan brokers — perhaps in a way that may not have otherwise been possible. The team also displayed incredible resilience and adaptability, from pulling off a superb virtual convention to solidifying IBAS's position as a leading authority and influence with government, regulators, and carriers alike. If there was ever a year that reinforced the value proposition of IBAS membership, 2020 was it, and is a case study in why it is one of the most important investment decisions a brokerage can make.

All these factors — paired with the arrival of a COVID vaccine — breathe new optimism for me as we embark along the path of 2021. At IBAS, the New Year has started the same way the old one ended: At a torrent pace, with a great deal of enthusiasm. Here are some of the reasons why:

2021-22 Board of Directors

I am very fortunate to be joined on the IBAS board by six other returning directors from last year: Vice Chair Dave Reidy (Henderson Insurance), Secretary-Treasurer Sarah Edwards (Bora Insurance Brokers), Jaycee Turtle (Lakeview Insurance Brokers), Jayne Gorill (Hoffman Kool Insurance), Keith Jordan (HUB

International), and Nicole Korpusik (Norquay Agencies). We are also lucky to have added Jason Galon (Galon Insurance Brokers) as a new director.

This continuity has undoubtedly helped IBAS weather the uncertainty of the pandemic and remains a highly rewarding experience. Now is the time to start thinking about whether you may be interested in board service when we issue a call for interest again this fall. Don't hesitate to reach out for more information if you'd like to put your name forward.

Return to in-person events

IBAS recognizes the important role that face-to-face relationship-building plays in the insurance industry. To that end, we continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation, including the rollout of vaccinations, in the hopes of *safely* returning to in-person events in 2021. In weighing our options, however, your health and safety will remain our top consideration and priority.

Given the current vaccination schedule announced by the Government of Canada, IBAS is aiming to host two in-person events in 2021 (pending public health conditions and meeting the target of vaccinating all Canadians by the end of September):

- **2021 IBAS Golf Tournament:** The first is the 2021 IBAS Golf Tournament, which is currently scheduled for Tuesday, June 15 in Warman. If the event proceeds on this day, it will likely be under a modified format to align with provincial guidelines and ensure maximum safety. We have, however, also reserved Thursday, September 16 as an alternate slot, so please save both dates.
- **2021 IBAS Convention:** Two dates are currently being held for the 2021 IBAS Convention in Saskatoon (both a Thursday and Friday): October 14 & 15 and October 28 & 29. We are waiting to see if the vaccination rollout remains on schedule before making a final decision.

Leaders Forum

Back in January, IBAS announced the launch of its new Leaders Forum in conjunction with SGI CANADA. This yearlong pilot program (beginning in April) will bring together a select group of brokerage principals and emerging brokerage leaders for facilitated monthly meetings that blend peer mentorship,



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group discussion, targeted learning, and shared accountability. Each meeting will focus on a topic of mutual interest — often led by an expert guest speaker — and will provide a confidential, constructive environment for participants to navigate the challenges facing their brokerages.

This is one of the most exciting projects we've ever undertaken at IBAS. It's not just about building leadership capacity — it's about creating an ecosystem to nurture the growth of resilient, innovative, and world-class insurance brokerages that will thrive in Saskatchewan communities for decades. Visit www.ibas.ca to learn more.

New professional development opportunities

In direct response to member input from the *2020 Brokerage Issues Survey*, IBAS has been working hard to coordinate several free or low-cost CE-eligible online events and seminars in the first half of 2021.

From negotiation and sales skills to lean and continuous improvement, there is something for everyone. My personal favourite is the return of the Saskatchewan Summit of Young Insurance Professionals on March 25 as a 100 per cent free, fully digital event. Unfortunately, the 2020 iteration had to be cancelled due to COVID; however, the summit is back with a vengeance in 2021, featuring an industry-best line-up of speakers that includes MSA Research President & CEO Joel Baker and Blair Feltmate, who heads up the Intact Centre on

Climate Adaptation at the University of Waterloo. I hope to 'see' you there!

Strengthened member engagement

The number one reason for optimism at IBAS in 2021 is *you*. It has been wonderful to see how our members have stepped up to the plate through the pandemic to make a difference for the broker community at-large. Whether you've joined a member advisory committee to help steer association policy, have made a contribution to support our annual charity campaign, or have participated in one of our many events or programs, *thank you*. Your involvement makes the difference, and we can only do what we do with your support.

Dedicated staff

Last but certainly not least: We are fortunate to have a small-but-mighty staff at IBAS, who did an amazing job adjusting to the many challenges of 2020. COVID threw them a curve ball and they hit it out of the park. Congratulations to Derek Lothian and his team — I know we can expect big things in the year ahead!

On behalf of the entire board, our best wishes for a safe, healthy, and prosperous 2021!

Dave Pettigrew is the president and CEO of Harvard Western Insurance. This past October, he was elected to a third term as chair of the IBAS board of directors. 🇩🇪



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Seventy-five years of supporting Saskatchewan, and we're just getting started

By Shelley Vandenberg, President & CEO, Saskatchewan Blue Cross



2020 was anything but normal — it was, without a doubt, a defining moment in human history. It was also the year I stepped into the role of president and CEO of Saskatchewan Blue Cross and ushered in one of my most inspiring and humbling years as a leader.

Our world and the insurance industry are moving faster than they ever have before, and the events of 2020 forced us all to take a hard look at the ways we've conventionally operated and delivered service. It required us to reimagine who we want to be and how we connect with each other. It demanded new thinking that wasn't always easy. The unwavering commitment, dedication, and passion my team demonstrated through immense, unexpected change during my first year with them was nothing short of remarkable.

As I look toward 2021 and the future of Saskatchewan Blue Cross, I'm struck with a sense of both gratitude and excitement.

Gratitude for a rich 75-year history in our province: When we first opened our doors as a not-for-profit organization in 1946, we were just seven doctors who saw a better path — we wanted people to have more equal access to essential health care services. Fast forward to today, and we've helped to lay the foundations for health insurance in Saskatchewan and now proudly support more than 100,000 members and more than 1,200 employers accessing health, wellness, and travel insurance that provides peace of mind.

Excitement for the future: 2021 marks our 75th anniversary, and there's a hum of positive energy travelling throughout our organization. We're building a bright future together, and it's a truly transformative time. We reimagined our mission, vision, and values in 2020, and we're in the midst of a multi-year journey to reinvent key parts of our business through digitization, new product and service agility, and a suite of new tools to enable stronger relationships with our broker partners and our

members. We're evolving while staying true to what's made us so special over the years: Being local means that we care deeply about delivering exemplary service, building trust, and investing in the wellbeing of our communities.

Looking forward

A mission to empower communities on their journey to whole health and wellness. A vision for a future of lifelong health and wellbeing for every person in Saskatchewan. A culture anchored by the core values of empathy, ambition, dependability, flexibility and discipline, and building community.

Demands for helpful support and seamless, simple, and well-curated experiences that deliver exceptional service are increasing. This year, Saskatchewan Blue Cross has an ambitious series of advances rolling out to help meet these needs, including new tools for Personal Health Plan members, a new broker portal, advances to our group business, new products, and a heightened focus on community investment in a time when community organizations need our support more than ever.

Through investments in people and culture, we're encouraging fresh thinking in all areas of our operations, honing skills development, and fostering a collective capacity for innovation.

On the immediate horizon

Enabling Personal Health Plan members

January 2021 saw the launch of a new member portal, enabling Personal Health Plan members to submit claims online through a simple three-step process, check their claims status, determine remaining coverage on their benefits, and much more. This, and a supporting app about to launch, would not

"As businesses, business owners, our partners, and as leaders in your community, I encourage you to look inwards. Look at what your people and your community need from you. Look at your practices and how you enable them through technology, security, and innovation. Where the compass is pointing us has changed. This is the time for reinvention in our industry."



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have been possible without feedback and input from our broker network and valued members. Your suggestions for functionality and service improvements are shaping the development of our digital platforms, products, and experiences.

New and improved plans for small businesses

With approximately 149,000 small businesses in Saskatchewan, and 98 per cent of these with less than 20 employees, we saw a need for a new, flexible, and affordable group benefits plan that provides tailored quotes to business owners in minutes. This new plan — Blue Essentials — also launched in January 2021, and includes coverage for hospital stays, health practitioners, dental, vision, prescription drugs, travel and more, with add-on customizable options like term life insurance or critical illness coverage.

Deepening focus on community investment

Over the years, we've been a long-time supporter of and partner to hundreds of Saskatchewan community organizations, investing our funds, resources, energy, and spirit to meaningfully advance the places we call home. This past year in particular, we worked to support those impacted by the pandemic, including donating 8,000 litres of sanitizer to first responders in partnership with LB Distillers and Stumbletown Distilling, arming 30,000 frontline workers with mask ear guard straps with

the Saskatchewan Health Authority, providing essential PPE equipment to first responders and hospitals, and sponsoring Med Hack+ — an initiative leveraging technology to research the COVID-19 genome.

In 2021, we're continuing to support community organizations advancing health and wellness across our province, and, as proud sponsors of the IBAS Community Leadership Award, we're excited to recognize brokers who go above and beyond to make a difference in Saskatchewan.

A time for reinvention

2020 was a year of exciting change, and 2021 will be no different. As businesses, business owners, our partners, and as leaders in your community, I encourage you to look inwards. Look at what your people and your community need from you. Look at your practices and how you enable them through technology, security, and innovation. Where the compass is pointing us has changed. This is the time for reinvention in our industry.

Shelley Vandenberg became the president and CEO of Saskatchewan Blue Cross in January 2020. Prior to assuming that role, Shelley held positions as president of First Calgary Financial and Legacy Financial, and as senior vice president of risk management with Connect First Credit Union. 🏡



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Hindsight is 2020

By Peter Braid, CEO, Insurance Brokers Association of Canada



Churchill once said we should never let a crisis go to waste. Looking back on the challenges of 2020, what opportunities emerged that will lead to a brighter and more prosperous future for insurance brokers?

First and foremost, there is an enormous opportunity to further amplify the essential value of the insurance broker.

Consumers have always known how important it is to have a trusted professional in their corner, working for their best interests. In the midst of the pandemic, when people needed help with insurer relief programs or payment flexibility, they turned to their trusted insurance broker. The care, compassion, and customer service that brokers provided for their clients will not soon be forgotten. We must continue to build on that positive impression.

The Insurance Brokers Association of Canada (IBAC) is highlighting the importance of the broker in our new national advertising campaign, *The Broker Advantage*, which reminds Canadians of the core values that we all share: Trust, support, innovation, custom advice,

and the stability and peace of mind that brokers provide in a world of risk and uncertainty.

We also must capitalize on the strong demand and momentum for technology.

One of the main lessons of the past year is the critical need to have a strong technical infrastructure. It is no longer a 'nice to have' — it is now a key factor in determining which businesses will thrive and which will struggle.

In the insurance industry, this means systems that talk to each other in the same language and in real time. IBAC has been leading the efforts to achieve real-time connectivity for several years, and the pandemic has only heightened the urgency. Now, with the addition of a full time Broker Connectivity Lead, Tom Reid, we are making substantial progress.

DX Connect is the next iteration in the IBAC mission to implement real-time connectivity in the broker channel. By using IBAC's convening power, we are bringing together industry partners to form the DX Connect Alliance. DX Connect will provide a platform for carriers, vendors, and brokers to implement select APIs that will reduce friction, streamline business processes,

lower costs, and improve the customer experience. As Canadians demand more digital solutions, brokerages that embrace technological advancement will reap the benefits.

Another welcome byproduct of the pandemic has been the heightened level of communication and engagement between broker associations and their members.

IBAS and other IBAC member associations have been diligent in keeping their members informed through a number of channels, including e-mail newsletters and bulletins, social media, virtual meetings and conventions, and other online forums. The increased use of digital solutions has had the added benefit of increasing engagement among members in smaller or more remote communities.

They have also found innovative ways to continue to work effectively to support and advocate for their members and provide valuable services. That is the advantage of belonging to a broker association.

The past year has been like no other. Initial challenges were overcome through hard work, collaboration, ingenuity, and communication. A lot of credit goes to brokers who stood firm in their commitment to putting the customer first. With the clarity of hindsight, we must embrace the positive changes, and set a trajectory for continued success.

Peter Braid is the CEO of IBAC. Prior to assuming that role in 2017, he served as a Member of Parliament for Kitchener-Waterloo between 2008 and 2015. #

"IBAS and other IBAC member associations have been diligent in keeping their members informed through a number of channels, including e-mail newsletters and bulletins, social media, virtual meetings and conventions, and other online forums. The increased use of digital solutions has had the added benefit of increasing engagement among members in smaller or more remote communities."



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How the COVID-19 vaccine has laid the blueprint for insurance industry collaboration

By Derek Lothian, President & CEO, IBAS



On January 11, 2020, a team of Chinese scientists submitted a data set to the website Virological.org — a shared repository for prepublication data intended to assist with public health research around the world. This information, communicated by Dr. Edward Holmes at the University of Sydney, contained the genetic sequence for the novel coronavirus, which had been isolated for the first time since being identified in the central city of Wuhan the month prior.

It was a scientific breakthrough of epic proportion. Instead of being tucked away as ‘intellectual property’ or closely guarded as a commercial trade secret, however, the data was released without hesitation into the global commons. Only two days later, on January 13, Massachusetts-based pharmaceutical firm Moderna, Inc. completed design of a COVID-19 vaccine — known as *mRNA-1273*.

The vaccine was a natural marriage between proprietary technological innovation and a collective effort towards ‘the greater good.’

At the time, messenger RNA (mRNA) technology had not been licensed for human use. But that was about to change — with profound implications.

Vaccines are traditionally derived from a dead or weakened virus, prompting the body to stave off the invader and build immunity. By contrast, Moderna’s mRNA technology used *synthetic* genes that could be generated and manufactured in a matter of weeks,

saving the company the time-onerous process of growing live virus in the lab. All they needed to put the idea into practice was the sequence.

Human trials soon began in March and showed an impressive efficacy rate of 94.5 per cent. Then, on December 23, Moderna’s vaccine became the second COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, leapfrogged only by a joint effort between pharma-giant Pfizer and Germany’s BioNTech. The big difference was that Moderna’s vaccine could last 30 days with simple refrigeration and six months at a temperature of -20°C, whereas the Pfizer product required freezer storage at a sub-arctic temperature of -70°C.

Both ventures nevertheless prospered. And so, too, did the corporations behind them. In the period between vaccine development and regulatory approval, Moderna’s stock skyrocketed sevenfold, BioNTech’s stock nearly tripled, and Pfizer shares rebounded to a high of \$41.12 per unit after dipping as low as \$26.99 per share in March.

The obvious questions now are: *Why am I telling you this? How is this story relevant to P&C insurance in Canada?*

I think it speaks volumes to the value of *partnership* — that collaboration, especially in difficult times, can simultaneously be both good business and altruistic for the betterment of our industry (as well as the consumer). We all win when we work together.

In my three-plus years at IBAS, at no point has that been more evident than

through the pandemic. The scope of the issues was great, the unanswered questions were many, and regardless of if you were a small broker, large broker, small mutual, or large national carrier, you could not navigate the challenges solely on your own. We were compelled out of necessity to link arms and figure things out on the fly. Yes, that led to some long days and considerable headaches. Yet, it also resulted in many of you (and us at IBAS) making rapid advancements — in technology, scalability, business process, talent management, and everywhere in between — that would have otherwise taken *years*, if they happened at all.

I won’t say there has been a ‘silver lining’ to the pandemic, because I think that discounts the incredible hardship and loss that our friends and neighbours have been forced to endure. And *business*, after all, is just one part of *life*. That said, there is no denying the insurance community has made remarkable progress over the past 12 months.

The trick will be sustaining that level of *meaningful* partnership going forward.

While our sector is full of healthy, spirited competition, we are approaching a crossroads that will once again require all players to push in the same direction.

Take, for instance, technology. Technology in itself is not a panacea — it is a tactical tool that can be applied to meet a specific business need. If your business strategy sucks, technology isn’t going to fix it. But the *customer* is evolving by leaps and bounds, and the



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“Technology in itself is not a panacea — it is a tactical tool that can be applied to meet a specific business need. If your business strategy sucks, technology isn’t going to fix it. But the customer is evolving by leaps and bounds, and the tools we are using to serve them are not keeping pace.”

tools we are using to serve them are not keeping pace.

It’s like trying to repair a Tesla with only a ratchet and wrench set. No, not every brokerage or insurer needs to adopt the same level of technology — or tools — to satisfy its strategy. If most of your customers own farm trucks from the 1990s, and you’re a lone technician that gets to three or four jobs a day, your toolbox needs to look a little bit different than the Telsa Service Centre in downtown Vancouver, with three or four

vehicles in the garage at a time. Both, though, can be profitable.

The point is there are a lot of different ‘cars’ (customers and business applications) and the ‘technicians’ (brokers and insurers) need to be able to pull the right tool for the job. From an insurance technology perspective, that’s where the importance of data standards and real-time broker-carrier connectivity truly shines through. Collaborative projects like the IBAC Data Exchange (or DX) Working Group, the Centre for Study of Insurance Operations (CSIO) Commercial Lines Certification Program, and the *Going Paperless* initiative led by our sister association at IBAO are critical steps to build out that ‘toolbox’ in a way that moves the entire industry — and not just one specific company — forward.

Another enduring example is the relationship between the SGI Auto Fund and Saskatchewan insurance brokerages that serve as motor licence issuers.

As you know, IBAS is currently in the process of reviewing and renewing the underpinnings of this relationship on

behalf of our members, including the *IBAS/SGI Auto Fund Strategic Accord*, which is scheduled to expire in November. Through this process, it will be vital to keep the customer first and foremost as we discuss and debate potential changes to technology, training, service access and quality, consumer protection, remuneration, and communication. The only tenable path forward is one whereby we anticipate *where* our shared customers are going, so we can create a solution that is a win for drivers, a win for taxpayers, a win for SGI, and a win for issuers. There may be bumps along the way; but it will be that spirit of *partnership* that ultimately pulls us through.

As the late, great Henry Ford once said: “Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.” Let’s commit to *working together* in 2021.

Derek has been the chief executive at IBAS since 2017. He can be reached at derek.lothian@ibas.ca or (306) 525-4075. 📞



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IBAS launches the 2021 **#BrokersCare** Campaign for Mental Health

By Kyle Halvorson, Manager, Community Engagement, IBAS



The COVID-19 pandemic has spawned a new mental health crisis in Saskatchewan. Concerns over personal and loved ones' health, anxiety around employment and finances, and loneliness stemming from social isolation has had severe impacts on youth, adults, and seniors alike.

That's why, in 2021, insurance brokers have committed to doing their part to make a difference.

Announced just prior to Christmas, the *#BrokersCare Campaign for Mental Health* is a yearlong IBAS initiative, presented in partnership with Wawanesa Insurance, dedicated entirely to raising funds and awareness to support improved mental health outcomes. One hundred per cent of all proceeds from the campaign will go directly to fund grassroots mental health projects in communities throughout the province.

For IBAS President & CEO Derek Lothian, the campaign is a natural fit for both the association and its members.

"I don't think anyone has been immune to the mental health challenges of the past year, myself included," explains Lothian. "It's been a tough go; and the organizations that are often relied upon most for help have been hit hard, too. This is our small way to be able to spark some positivity and make a real impact in the communities where our members live and work."

Now through to December, eligible organizations — registered charities, not-for-profits, community organizations, and educational institutions (including K-12 and post-secondary schools) — may apply for one-time grants ranging from \$100 – \$10,000. These funds must be used to offset hard costs related to the delivery of targeted mental wellness initiatives.

Projects will be evaluated based on demonstrated need, impact, and the capacity to execute.

Lothian says that the IBAS Emerging Brokers Council, which is responsible for organizing the campaign, has been deliberate in not putting too many parameters around what constitutes as an 'eligible' project.

"The reality is that needs will vary from organization to organization and community to community," he says. "Mental health challenges affect us all in different ways, and so there is no template for a support that will work for everyone. It could be a virtual guest speaker, a program to reach out to the elderly, or a care package to help colleagues cope with stress. While we unfortunately won't have the resources to fund everything, we thought it was important for people to be able to tell us what they needed to move the needle."

Grants are financed entirely by campaign fundraising efforts, which IBAS will be rolling out at various stages throughout the year.

For example: On, February 3, IBAS hosted a lunch-hour e-learning session with Saskatoon-based advocate Heidi Fischer on the topic of mental health in the workplace. Although this event was free to attend, optional donations were invited, and several cheques quickly flowed into the IBAS office.



"One of our major goals is to simply keep mental wellness at the forefront of everyone's mind. If seeing our campaign logo on a t-shirt or in an e-mail reminds someone to check in on a friend or colleague, we've made a difference. Never underestimate the impact those small gestures can make."

Another way brokers and industry partners can contribute is through the purchase of campaign t-shirts. IBAS has partnered with homegrown apparel company Prairie Proud to produce and sell specially designed t-shirts for \$34.99 each. \$20 from each unit sold goes directly to project funding.

These ultra-soft, unisex t-shirts come in heathered black and are available in sizes extra small through double extra large. Prices are subject to GST but include standard shipping within Canada. Product information and a sizing chart can be found on the order page at www.ibas.ca/tshirts.html.

In the first 48 hours upon launching, 200 t-shirts were sold, generating \$4,000 in funding.

Lothian hopes the campaign will not only connect great organizations and good ideas to funding capacity, but will spark valuable conversations as well.

"One of our major goals is to simply keep mental wellness at the forefront of everyone's mind," says Lothian. "If seeing our campaign logo on a t-shirt or in an e-mail reminds someone to check in on a friend or colleague, we've made a difference. Never underestimate the impact those small gestures can make."

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BLOWN AWAY

2021 starts with a bluster of weather damage

By Nicole Sinclair, Editor, SaskBroker Magazine

As the final calendar page turned on the headache that was 2020, many of us found ourselves embracing the first inklings of hope that had surfaced in quite some time. COVID-19 vaccines were finally about to arrive — and, hopefully soon with them, the possible end to our recurring Groundhog Day of kitchen table workstations, weekend staycations, and takeout-only restaurant meals. Some of us even dared to daydream of years passed, when we would have been booking sunny, tropical vacations to escape the dreaded February on the Prairies.

But Mother Nature always has a way of putting us back in our place. And, on January 13, she teamed up with her good friend Jack Frost to remind us that 2021 and 2020 are indeed very harsh cousins.

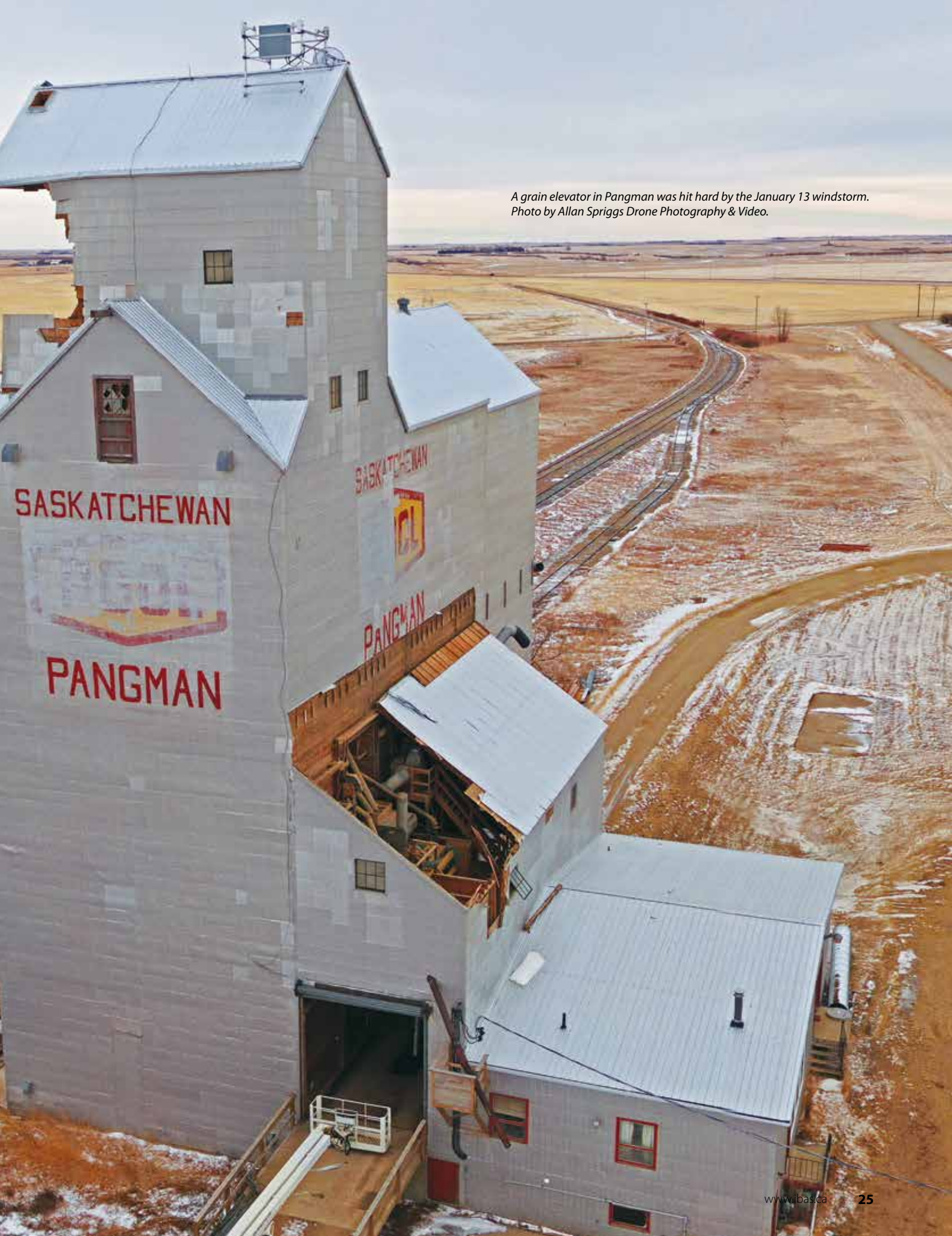
A record-breaking storm rolled in from the west, unloading much of its destructive powers throughout Saskatchewan, bringing whiteout conditions and leaving plenty of property damage in its wake. Wind gusts reached 126 kilometers per hour in Regina and up to 161 kilometres per hour in Moose Jaw — smashing records and exceeding the benchmark for an F1 tornado. Less than half a month in, and the first catastrophic weather event of the year had already occurred.

When conditions cleared and roadways began to reopen, residents — especially in the southern portion of the province — ventured out to survey the damage. Unsurprisingly to anyone who witnessed it, what they found was a mess: Missing shingles, rooves peels back, fences toppled, and sheds overturned.

According to Saskatchewan's two largest property insurers, the damage was also costly.

"We estimate the total damage will be similar to the late fall storm in 2017, which resulted in \$16 million in damage for policyholders and between \$40 – \$50 million in total damage across the province," explained SGI CANADA's Andrew Voroney





*A grain elevator in Pangman was hit hard by the January 13 windstorm.
Photo by Allan Spriggs Drone Photography & Video.*

"We estimate the total damage will be similar to the late fall storm in 2017, which resulted in \$16 million in damage for policyholders and between \$40 – \$50 million in total damage across the province. While it is still early, we currently have more than 2,000 property claims on the go. A typical summer month would create 2,500 – 3,000 claims, and an average January might see 700 or 800."



Andrew Voroney, Regional Vice President, Saskatchewan, SGI CANADA.

in a late January interview. "While it is still early, we currently have more than 2,000 property claims on the go. A typical summer month would create 2,500 – 3,000 claims, and an average January might see 700 or 800."

In the entirety of 2019, SGI CANADA experienced losses of only \$27 million stemming from severe weather.

Kevin Bailey, vice president of the central region for Wawanesa Insurance, added that it wasn't only the *impact* of the storm that was notable — it was the *timing* as well.

"In my 34 years working in insurance, this is the first time I have seen a weather event like this in January," he said. "The last large wind and hail event was in 2018. A storm like this at this time of year does create a challenge as we prepare our financials and could very well impact loss ratios for brokerages."

The Insurance Bureau of Canada has pegged the damage of the January storm at \$134 million across the three westernmost provinces.

Saskatchewan, of course, is no stranger however to extreme weather.

The infamous Regina Cyclone of June 30, 1912, killed 28 people and resulted in \$1.2 million in property damage (roughly \$32.2 million by today's standards — which is a feat in itself considering, at the time, Regina's population hovered around a modest 32,000 people). It took the city two years to repair the wreck and 10 years to pay off its accumulated storm debt.

Then there was the 10-day blizzard of 1947, when snow shut down highways and rail lines from Calgary to Winnipeg — some until the spring. In places, only the upper-most tips of power poles stuck out from underneath the massive drifts.

And, more recently, who could forget the flash floods of Spring 2011, the La Ronge wildfires of 2015, or the powerful Saskatoon blizzard of 2017?

But what makes the 'January bluster of 2021' particularly unique is its combination of magnitude, timing, *and* reach.

Reports of major damage came from as far north as Prince Albert and as far south as communities along the U.S. border.

As insurance professionals, when most of us see the damage, our thoughts immediately go to claims and the effect an event such as this can have on both our customers and carriers. Windstorms of this severity are unusual for the winter months. Typically, spikes in major weather events — often wind and hail — occur in the summer, when insurers pull out all the stops to be prepared, from staffing up adjusters to establishing special response teams. So, one can imagine the strain when an event occurs so out of the ordinary. Teamwork and coordination become all that more important.

"Luckily, our adjusters at SGI CANADA are resourceful and committed, and when their power went out, many resorted to servicing customers through their cell phones and even charging devices in their vehicle so they could keep going throughout the day," said Voroney. "They kept in constant contact with each other to help redirect efforts as we became aware of which communities were most impacted and what type of damage was most prevalent."

At Wawanesa, Bailey shared a similar sentiment — although the distinct challenges operating as a national insurer in a COVID-19 world brought with them additional nuances.

"Wawanesa has a national CAT team that provides resources and expertise, and can be quickly mobilized when such events happen," noted Bailey. "Although the response looked slightly different than in years passed. With COVID restrictions, we don't have employees travelling across provincial borders. So, the team focused on internal and external communications, and the use of virtual tools to assist. Furthermore, a national claims service team was there to offer support over the phone, with the unaffected east coast coming in to lend a hand and being particularly helpful."



Kevin Bailey, Vice President, Central Region, Wawanesa Insurance.

"One way brokers can support us during an influx is to provide all the information they learn on the call with their clients. Insight such as a few lost shingles versus missing an entire roof helps us triage the claims and make sure we are placing the properties with the most severe damage into a 'high priority' category, with the most experienced adjusters making the call."



The skating rink in Avonlea also suffered significant shingle loss to its roof. Photo by Allan Spriggs Drone Photography & Video.

The high volume of claims extended across both personal and commercial property. In addition to residential building damage, auto claims spiked due to dislodged branches and building materials striking parked vehicles — not to mention an uptick in collision claims from treacherous road conditions. Grain bins and farm equipment were not spared, either.

All-in-all, 100,000 SaskPower customers were left without power, adding an additional level of complexity for brokers and carriers. Some service remained off for three full days.

This event served as a reminder that changes to weather are having a profound impact on the insurance industry. The Insurance Bureau of Canada reports that, in 2020, severe weather cost insurers across the country \$42.4 billion in losses. The Calgary hailstorm in June totalled \$1.3 billion in damage alone.

What to do about these trends from a policy perspective is one issue. An equally important conversation, though, is how all stakeholders can work together when a loss occurs to respond swiftly and with the highest levels of care and service.

“One way brokers can support us during an influx is to provide all the information they learn on the call with their clients,” suggested Voroney. “Insight such as a few lost shingles versus missing an entire roof helps us triage the claims and make sure we are placing the properties with the most severe damage into a ‘high priority’ category, with the most experienced adjusters making the call.”

Albeit great advice, let’s hope it is guidance we won’t have to put into practice too many more times through the remainder of 2021. 🏠



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Ready for a rebound?





Supply chain issues, travel restrictions, COVID-19 immunization progress, and a myriad of other factors will all have unique impact on the prosperity of individual sectors of Saskatchewan's economy over the next year. But what are the experts forecasting? We reached out to five of the best and brightest to ask their predictions and insights for 2021.

Prabha Mitchell

President & CEO

Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan

Small business is 'big business' in Saskatchewan. And, in 2020, COVID-19

impacted most Saskatchewan small businesses.

With the majority of women-owned businesses in Saskatchewan being 'micro enterprises' with approximately 80 per cent having fewer than 10 employees, the pandemic most certainly amplified the challenges and barriers many women-owned businesses encounter. Moving forward, we will see businesses, including women-owned businesses, reassess, pivot, and innovate through these challenging times. Unfortunately, we may also see small businesses cease operations. To help boost success, a significant proportion of women-owned businesses will digitize many aspects

of their business even if this entails incremental shifts in adoption and adaptation of technology.

The rollout of the vaccine and restoration of safety and wellbeing will be pivotal in small businesses remaining viable and sustainable; however, it will become critical that this is accompanied by a fervor to continue to support local and shop local.

In Canada, our values and principles are paramount during crisis, evoking gratitude. As always, in Saskatchewan, our values remain focused on *people* and *community*, which I am confident will continue to anchor economic recovery and support for small businesses.





Jim Bence

President & CEO
Hospitality Saskatchewan

As many are already aware, the tourism world was the first to be hit, continues to be the hardest hit, and will certainly take the longest to recover. As the COVID-19 recovery runway stretches out and is getting longer than early estimates, operators are coming to grips with the stark reality of the possibility of permanent closure of their businesses.

The convergence of three storms — unrelenting fixed costs, looming layoff payouts, and significant challenges finding insurance and/or spiking insurance premiums — have created tremendous uncertainty and anxiety within the hospitality industry. Although almost every hotel and motel operator has experienced crippling reductions in occupancies, our full-service urban

properties are experiencing particularly acute shortages in revenues.

While limited leisure travel still occurs, the corporate market has almost completely evaporated and, along with it, the meetings, conferences, and trade shows that make up much of a hotel's revenue during the year. And, as we approach the much-needed busy summer season, the fear of the industry losing June, July, and August as a potential 'return to normal' is becoming prevalent. Many owners have used their reserves and are wondering how to manage the balance of 2021. Liquidity is the key to survival in this current environment and many do not have access to the cash needed to continue operations.

For a great number of our members, this year's insurance challenges were unexpected and took the entire industry by relative surprise. Having engaged IBAS in the early days of the pandemic, we have appreciated the efforts of Derek and his team as they have sought and delivered both solutions and partners to assist us during this critical time. In collaboration with the Insurance Bureau of Canada, IBAS has worked with industry and has found remedies for those hardest hit in our provincial market. The road ahead remains extremely uncertain, but it will be because of the efforts and collaboration with groups like IBAS that we will be able to weather this storm and hopefully emerge relatively intact by the end of 2021.

"For a great many of our members, this year's insurance challenges were unexpected and took the entire industry by relative surprise. Having engaged IBAS in the early days of the pandemic, we have appreciated the efforts of Derek and his team as they have sought and delivered both solutions and partners to assist us during this critical time."

John Lee

President & CEO

Economic Development Regina

COVID-19 has brought on a recession unlike any other, and it continues to impact us in ways that would have seemed impossible not long ago. Regina's economic recovery will be two-tiered, allowing some industries to restart more quickly than others. Travel, hospitality, the arts, and entertainment are among the hardest hit, and will likely feel the impact the longest, due to restrictions put in place to control the spread of the virus.

There are also bright spots in Regina's economy. In October 2020, overall retail spending in Saskatchewan increased

4.7 per cent over the same timeframe in 2019. With displaced disposable income, more time at home, and historically low lending rates, many people invested in their homes. This confluence of events resulted in a flurry of demand for housing and renovations in Regina. Look for that trend to continue into 2021.

Another potential bright spot for 2021 is the advancement of agri-value processing. Avena Foods is expected to open a new oat processing facility this year, and Raven Industries has announced plans to open a

21,000-square-foot manufacturing facility for the Raven Dot® Power Platform. These are pivotal investments as our economy continues to diversify into new value-added industries, and more may be on the way.

Fueled by a host of strategic assets, including the second youngest population in Canada, Regina has the energy and the vision to achieve great things. By working together, we can turn the page on the virus and make 2021 a rebound year.

Jayson Myers

President & CEO

NGen Manufacturing Canada

It has been a tough year for most businesses in Saskatchewan and right across Canada. Close to 27,000 people throughout the province lost their jobs last year — about five per cent of the total workforce. The economy will rebound once we get COVID under control; but, in the meantime, it will continue to be a tough slog for our frontline workers, for businesses, communities, families, and for all of us struggling to get through the pandemic.

There's little certainty that we can count on today with respect to the trajectory of the pandemic, the risks we will face in the future, or the timing of the recovery. There *are*, however, some things that have become apparent over the past year that can guide us in managing business risks and taking advantage of new economic opportunities, and that should give us greater assurance and confidence for what lies ahead.

Digitalization is clearly one trend that has had a huge impact on us all. What did we do before the age of Zoom and Teams? And, *why*? Digital technologies have tied us together. They have enabled

a much higher degree of communication and collaboration than ever before. In business, they have — on the whole — enabled significant gains in productivity, enhanced flexibility, and performance improvements. For many enterprises, shops, restaurants, and the like, they have led to entirely new channels for sales and ways of interacting with customers. For other key industries like manufacturing, they have kept people working in a safe environment, allowed companies to manage changes in orders, inventories, and supply lines more effectively, improved process efficiencies, and accelerated the launch of new products and services.

The role that manufacturing has played in making PPE, medical devices, and therapeutic products for use by frontline workers in the pandemic has shone a spotlight on the strategic importance of the sector (including right here in Saskatchewan), as well as on the many gaps in our manufacturing and supply chain capabilities across Canada. It has taught us all about the risks we run if we do not have the

strategic autonomy we need to manage emergency situations like the pandemic. It has also revealed a host of new opportunities for manufacturers to step in to fill supply chain gaps as long as they are able to compete on a global basis — something Saskatchewan manufacturers know better than perhaps any of their competitors across the country.

That's where digitization and advanced technologies come into play. It will be the ability of manufacturers to develop, scale up, and adopt technologies, while — at the same time — assuring that they have the supporting processes and skills in place, that will shape the future of manufacturing in Canada. Advanced manufacturing is not all about technology. It's also about leadership, management, and people. It will be those companies that use technology to come up with new ways to enhance customer value, improve operating processes, and engage and upgrade the skills of their workforce that will be best positioned to compete and grow in 2021 and beyond.

Eric Anderson

Executive Director
Saskatchewan Industrial & Mining
Suppliers Association

Potash sales are forecasted to be at record levels this year. Both Bloomberg and Morningstar are forecasting that fertilizer producers are next in line to benefit from rising crop prices, with farmers poised to plant more acres in 2021. More importantly, Bloomberg's Green Markets pegs global potash demand at an all-time high in 2021, while Morningstar maintains it will likely set a new "high watermark." According to analyst Seth Goldstein, the improved farmer income could mean more spending next year, pushing potash prices to the mid-\$200s a ton — up from about \$230 currently. Prices may continue higher to \$280 by 2023 or the following year.

The oil sector, meanwhile, is forecasted to have a decisive rebound towards the latter half of 2021. During December's Canadian Association of Oilwell Drilling Contractors 'State of the Industry' event, Sprott's Senior Energy Portfolio Manager Eric Nuttall made a very compelling case for Canadian oil moving forward. He said that, yes, demand plummeted in 2020 — but supply has dropped a lot more; and once demand returns later in the year, opportunities for Canadian producers will increase rapidly. He pointed to the collapse of investments into the U.S. shale oil sector, which was the global swing producer to balance supply and demand. He also noted that BP

and Shell are pulling capital from oil drilling and are going heavily into renewables, further adding to a supply shortfall. Nuttall went on to explain his hesitancy to follow suit, citing lack of returns without government subsidies. He added that, to hit electric vehicle projections alone, it will require the use of all global lithium and cobalt production capacity — and some beyond that.

In short: Oil is still *the* investment energy versus the alternatives. Expect the sector to rebound to replace a global shortage in production once demand and prices return to form beginning later in 2021. 🚧



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Increased client satisfaction as working with BioSweep ensures insured owners are back in their homes and businesses quickly with as little disruption as possible.

BioSweep can vastly improve loss ratios, which improves the broker/insurer relationship.

BioSweep can sharpen a broker's competitive advantage among their peers who may have a higher loss ratio (underwriters can and have reason to be more flexible considering business when loss ratios are good).

A low loss ratio will usually trigger Contingent Profit Commission (CPC) Plans providing an additional source of revenue based on sharing in insurer profits.

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Never has there been a more effective and more rapid solution for odour eradication and decontamination. Our proprietary process uses a proven science called **Advanced Photocatalytic Oxidation (APO)** to permanently remove all odours and decontaminate all surfaces our gases come in contact with.

There is no technology or technique that can provide the rapid permanent results that BioSweep can by utilizing APO.

Advanced Photocatalytic Oxidation (APO) is an advanced, proprietary process by which both airborne and surface-borne volatile organic compounds (VOC's) and most pathogens are destroyed by converting the water molecules in ambient air to produce oxyradicals. These powerful oxyradicals include high levels of vaporous hydrogen peroxide, purified oxygen and trivalent oxygen.

The result is an odour free, decontaminated environment that has the cleanest of air quality.

By working closely with contractors in the field we can develop a deodorization strategy that produces efficient and effective results: (1) Eradicating odour, (2) decontaminating indoor spaces, and (3) doing it all in the most rapid time frame possible ensures minimal interruption to the home or business owner.

Whether you are a restoration contractor, insurance adjuster or property owner that has an odour problem, **BioSweep Saskatchewan will restore your indoor air quality back to better than original condition without the use of any harmful chemicals.**

In a perfect scenario, BioSweep Saskatchewan would prefer to be called at the onset of the claim and ideally have an initial site meeting where the adjuster, contractor, and BioSweep professional are all present to discuss an initial scope of work that won't be deviated from.

Why BioSweep Saskatchewan?

BioSweep can reduce most pack outs, decrease demolition of building materials, as well as dramatically decrease the need for painting. BioSweep also drastically reduces Non-Restorable content items, which saves not only claims dollars but also reduces the amount of material filling landfill sites. When the restoration contractor has finished the recommended scope of work, BioSweep will perform the deodorization as the last process before any rebuild steps are started.

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Winter Advocacy Report

By Derek Lothian, President & CEO, IBAS

When the IBAS board of directors unveiled the association's new, three-year strategic plan this past fall, it formally recognized our role representing your interests — with government, regulators, and carriers — as the foundational value proposition of membership. Plainly put: Advocating on your behalf is the most important thing we do.

It's also my favourite part of the job.

I've personally been involved in government relations — or *GR* — for the better part of the past decade. And during that time, I've had the opportunity to work on some fascinating files, from international free trade agreements and the creation of the Canada Job Grant to major investment and tax policy at both the federal and provincial levels.

The overwhelming majority of GR work, however, is not about proposing novel programs or schmoozing over martinis in some swanky, upscale bar (although, I'm not going to lie, I wish it was). The truth is: Most GR is grunt work — fixing or preventing unintended consequences stemming from government or regulatory action (or *inaction*).

The good news is that the relationships we've built at IBAS over the past three years have helped to minimize the time we spend in the trenches responding to 'manufactured' problems. Yes, those situations still arise; but, when they do, it is often borne out of a need for greater clarity or to respond to changing conditions — not because we haven't been consulted before a decision has been made. That's a very good place to find ourselves. I have no interest in IBAS being the 'loudest voice in the room,' and neither should you. I believe IBAS best serves its members when it is positioned as a trusted, sought-after, and proactive *advisor* on the issues that matter most.

The ability to influence policy ultimately requires three things: One, a strong mandate (which we are fortunate to have, representing roughly 98 per cent of Saskatchewan insurance brokerages, operating in more than 250 communities across the province); two, a well-resourced and well-connected strategy; and, three, an informed and compelling position. That last one is the linchpin — and is only possible if our members are up to date on and provide input to the files we are advancing.



Which brings us to this report. Here, you will find a condensed summary of (only) some of the issues we are working on, along with an overview of their statuses and potential implications. As always, if you have questions, concerns, or comments, please reach out to me via the information found at the end of this column.

Best Terms Pricing

Beginning late last year, IBAS began to field several inquiries related to *best terms pricing* (BTP) — a topic that has received immense (albeit sometimes *inaccurate*) attention from media and regulatory bodies in certain jurisdictions across Canada (most notably B.C. and Alberta).

In short, BTP is a method of pricing a subscription policy, where there are multiple insurers covering varying portions of a particular risk. These carriers are paid uniformly based on the highest rate offered, regardless of the risk allocation.

For example: A three-story condominium requires a \$5 million insurance policy. A *lead writer* indicates it will cover 45 per cent of the policy at a quoted rate of 18 cents per \$100 of

coverage, and now the broker must fill the remaining 55 per cent. A second carrier agrees to the *lead rate* at 35 per cent and a third agrees to the lead rate at 15 per cent, leaving five per cent of the policy remaining. A fourth carrier agrees to take on the last five per cent but requires a rate of 30 cents. Under BTP, the lead writer will then be asked to match the higher rate of 30 cents, followed by the additional subscribers until the full 100 per cent is subscribed at the same rate. If a carrier provided a *lower* rate than that of the lead, it would be asked to lead the policy and the same process would be executed. This is a common practice on subscription policies, including both within the strata condo market and on other commercial risks, such as those related to farming, manufacturing, and heavy industry.

Why can't insurers use 'split pricing'?

In contrast to BTP, *split pricing* is the concept that each carrier charges their specific quoted rate for their respective percentage of the risk. Using the aforementioned example, the first three carriers would collect an 18-cent rate, while the fourth would collect a 30-cent rate on five per cent of the policy. While —

especially in a hard market — split pricing could ultimately lead to lower premiums, and there is no regulation currently *preventing* this approach, there are two main issues that are of concern.

The first is technology. IBAS is currently aware of only one carrier with the systems infrastructure in place that would allow it to be the lead writer in a split pricing scenario. Some others have indicated that manual workarounds *were* possible, although all said that a permanent solution would require varying degrees of technology upgrades, ranging from 'somewhat minor' to 'complete overhauls.' SGI CANADA, for instance, which is the lead writer on a large percentage of subscription policies in the province, could not retain that lead writer position in a split pricing scenario using their current platform.

The second issue is a mix between capacity and market dynamics. In Saskatchewan, a trio of insurers are responsible for close to three-fifths of the total non-auto property market capacity. The remaining 98 companies, meanwhile, write an average of only \$4.5 million in property premiums annually. Due to this limited volume and, in some cases, to a lack of underwriting capability, many (particularly small) insurers rely on BTP as a substitute for more sophisticated rating practices. This injects additional capacity into the market, leveraging the efforts of other insurance companies without requiring small-volume players to incur prohibitive underwriting costs.

What impact has BTP had on the consumer?

There are many situations in which BTP *does* have upward pressures on premiums. IBAS has seen several policies where BTP has led to premiums between 15 per cent and 25 per cent higher than what would have been incurred if split pricing had been successfully applied.

It is important to note, though, that BTP is significantly more impactful in a hard market than in soft or regular market conditions. In the latter, there is generally excess capacity and competition for most risks, even if a risk is on a subscription policy. This results in carriers meeting the rate set by the lead writer, or attempting to win that business and take over as the lead writer by offering a lower rate. But, in a hard market, brokers regularly find themselves struggling to secure capacity to fill the subscription; and it is not uncommon to require four or more subscribers to some policies — either because of the unique challenges of that specific risk or the limitations of carriers' reinsurance treaties that prevent them from taking a larger share of the risk.

It is also key to recognize there are sound and ethical reasons why different insurance carriers would require different rates on the same risk. Publicly traded companies, for instance, have more stringent return on capital expectations than mutuals or government-owned insurers. Loss history, reinsurance, and access to underwriting data are other factors to keep in mind.

What about 'weighted average pricing?'

IBAS has been informed that some regulators are exploring the concept of *weighted average pricing* as an alternative to BTP, whereby an average of bids — weighted for the percentage of risk each insurer is taking — would be calculated to arrive at a singular price for the entirety of the policy. While this approach *does* address technology limitations, it *does not* take into account many of the other factors at play.

For example, if the weighted average of a risk is 20 cents, but an insurer requires 25 cents to participate on that policy, it effectively takes capacity out from an already hard market. Additionally, it is reasonable to assume that carrier behaviour would simply evolve to meet those demands.

If the lead writer is at, say, 20 cents, and another carrier *knows* they need 25 cents to participate, that carrier would simply be inclined to elevate its bid well beyond 25 cents so that the average would be increased to a level that would allow participation. Again, this would seldom take place in a soft or regular market.

Requiring a 'blind bid' (where insurers cannot see each other's bids, including that of the lead writer — in other words: a 'blind tender' process) would likely compound and complicate adverse outcomes. It has been strongly suggested by insurers they believe this requirement would further limit participation and squeeze out capacity — at least on subscription policies, as all insurers would be required to fully evaluate and underwrite each risk, regardless of how small of percentage they aim to take.



Kent Brunen

We are pleased to welcome Kent Brunen to our team as **Manager, Group Sales**.

Kent will be responsible for developing and executing Sales strategies, implementing new approaches for our business, and providing leadership to our Group Sales staff.

Please join us in welcoming Kent to the Saskatchewan Blue Cross team!

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What is IBAS recommending to government?

IBAS fully understands and appreciates the impact that BTP may have on some insurance consumers in terms of elevated premiums. IBAS remains greatly concerned, however, of the unintended consequences that any regulatory changes may have, leading to a loss of capacity in today's immensely hard market. It is IBAS's general position that:

- BTP is, at its root, an issue of market capacity that cannot be solved by a regulatory or price-control solution;
- Any decrease in market capacity in the immediate future will have a net negative impact on Saskatchewan consumers and the Saskatchewan economy;
- Insurance companies should be fully consulted prior to any decision around BTP regulatory measures;
- Should further regulatory measures be implemented, they must be executed with sufficient notice to allow insurance carriers and brokerages to adapt their operations accordingly;

- Any considered regulatory measures around BTP should only be directed at strata coverage and not more broadly towards commercial insurance;
- If insurers develop the technological capability to serve as a lead writer in a split pricing environment, that practice should be encouraged and supported; and
- Brokers must retain the ability to have open conversations with insurance companies in the placement of business — including dialogue related to rating, capacity, and the bid share of subscription policies.

Where does the issue stand?

IBAS has met and/or exchanged communications with Saskatchewan's insurance regulators, as well as senior representatives from both government and opposition. We are pleased that, as of early February, officials have indicated they understand IBAS's concerns and will not be following the lead of B.C. or Alberta by implementing immediate changes. The

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Superintendent of Insurance will continue to monitor and review the file in conjunction with his counterparts at the Canadian Council of Insurance Regulators (CCIR).

IBAS-SGI Issuer Negotiations

Last July, the IBAS board approved the creation of the new IBAS Issuer Advisory Committee to guide the association's activities and positions relative to the insurance broker and SGI Auto Fund motor licence issuing relationship. Specifically, the committee has a three-part mandate:

- Review and make recommendations to the board and management with respect to renegotiating and/or renewing the *IBAS/SGI Auto Fund Strategic Accord*, which is scheduled to expire this coming November;
- Review and make recommendations to the board and management with respect to renegotiating and/or renewing the standard *SGI Issuer's Agreement*, *Issuer's Website Contract*, and *Remuneration Agreement*; and
- Support IBAS's member consultation, advocacy, and stakeholder relations activities to advance the priorities of this mandate.

The committee has met five times to-date, including once with senior SGI leadership to learn more about the organization's digital and corporate transformation efforts. Discussions continue to progress and IBAS remains optimistic that a consensus agreement will be reached in the coming months.

Our tentative workplan aims to finalize a submission for a vote of approval by the general IBAS membership no later than June — although that *does* leave a four-month window of contingency for potential delays. This submission requires a two-thirds majority vote of brokerage members for ratification.

PDAP & Overland Flood

IBAS continues to work closely with its partners, including the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC), to shift the burden of overland flood risk away from the taxpayer and onto the private insurance market.

Since 2018, IBAS has maintained a six-point policy framework to guide this process, which is focused on providing solutions for high-risk properties, limiting growth on flood-exposed land, strengthening flood defences, and educating consumers. While Saskatchewan enjoys the highest uptake of private overland flood insurance of any jurisdiction in Canada, the ongoing reliance on the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program (PDAP) in its existing form only serves to undermine the relatively low cost and high eligibility of private coverage.

IBAS is advocating for the creation of a Saskatchewan-centric working group to advance this effort — with the goal of winding down the current iteration of PDAP in the next three years.

Hardened Commercial Market

Brokers know full-well the stresses of ongoing hard market challenges, especially in the hospitality sector. To help find

capacity for hard-to-place risks, IBAS has been working through the IBC to pilot IBC's Risk Manager Service in Saskatchewan.

Under this program, an expert 'risk manager' works as a liaison between the client, your brokerage, and insurance companies to ensure the nature of the risk is properly understood and that all reasonable mitigation measures have been taken.

Although this resource was originally setup in Alberta to assist condo corporations, IBAS recently completed a 'test case' with IBC in Saskatchewan's hotel industry that led to the successful placing of coverage. Please note you *must* be the brokerage of record to use this service; it is not available for 'new' clients (to prevent it being used as a business development tool).

E&O Exposure

In conjunction with our sister associations across the country, IBAS is monitoring the potential for brokerages to face E&O exposure due to commercial and class action lawsuits stemming from COVID-19. A recent court ruling in the U.K. has spurred new concern that brokerages may be tested in court regarding whether they properly advised their clients relative to business interruption limitations and/or the availability of pandemic-specific coverages.

It is important to note, however, that there are considerable differences between the Canadian and U.K. markets that somewhat limit the likelihood of a similar scenario. IBAS nevertheless is engaged in ongoing consultation and will keep you apprised of the latest developments and guidance.

Other Active Files

- Regulatory authorities from across Canada have undertaken a process to review licensing requirements in the insurance industry and consider whether the harmonization of requirements makes sense. IBAS has provided feedback into this process through the Insurance Brokers Association of Canada (IBAC), and is adamant that CAIB must remain an eligible licensing pathway.
- IBAS remains highly engaged with the Superintendent of Insurance and General Insurance Council of Saskatchewan on a wide range of key issues, including the need to bridge the regulatory misalignment on brokerage rights and responsibilities related to mid-term policy cancellations, as well as ensuring the common-sense interpretation and equal application of rules governing insurance advertising (including websites, logos, and signage).
- IBAS continues to support national work through IBAC focused on maintaining the separation of banks and insurance (especially as new technologies and financial industry business models emerge) and providing input into the federal regulatory review on incentives related to the sale of insurance.

Questions, comments, or input? Contact me at derek.lothian@ibas.ca or by calling (306) 525-4075. 📞



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A fire the pandemic could not extinguish

By Todd Hochban, President, West Coast Training

Remember the ‘good old days?’ This question is being used more this year than ever before. Remember packed restaurants? Remember crowds at Mosaic Stadium watching the beloved green and white? Remember sitting elbow-to-elbow at local curling clubs watching provincial playdowns? These are all fond, cherished, and delightful memories of the ‘old days.’

If 2020 is the year future generations will refer to as *historic*, 2021 will be the year they speak of as *the comeback*. This year holds so much promise and potential; with vaccines comes freedom and a return to those ‘good old days.’ It can be easy to dwell on the negative, but I want to look forward. Last year taught us many valuable lessons — some of which will be with us forever.

As Plato famously said, “Necessity is the mother of invention”. This makes me wonder if he was talking about our lives in 2020. From my perspective at the front of the classroom, I have noticed a few things in the past year that I am confident will continue. Let me polish up my crystal ball.

After our quick change to Zoom classrooms, we saw record numbers of CAIB Immersion students in 2020. Not only was the number of students exceptionally high, engagement from those students was also high. Clearly, our hunger for knowledge is a fire the pandemic could not extinguish.

Remote learning has proven not only to be effective, but fun, too — and the feedback has been tremendous. I predict technical courses using automation and/or digitization will become more and more commonplace, even after this pandemic is over. It just makes sense on many levels. Confidence is high that live training will be back with us this year, combining virtual and live educational offerings will be the standard. I predict that remote learning will become a common component of learning, from kindergarten to university to professional education.

In 2020, change was the norm. Often when old methods are challenged or when change is forced upon people, there is resistance and, in some cases, even anger and push back. These are natural feelings. Another observation from 2020 is that acceptance of change and embracing change will continue. Let me explain.

When our first shutdown occurred in March of 2020 (seems like an eternity ago), I was speaking with IBAS President & CEO Derek Lothian about what was going to happen with our CAIB training in Saskatchewan. Derek suggested a Zoom call to discuss ‘face-to-face.’ I pushed back and said, “No, a telephone call will do.” You see: I am human, and I have normal feelings, too! Resisting change will be less common as we have been forced to change this year, and I am no exception.



Now we are one year in and with investment, research, and training I have now hosted more than 750 hours of Zoom training. And I like it! More importantly, my customers like it. I predict that challenging the status quo will become a common activity moving forward, to everyone's benefit.

2020 presented another change: Students asking more questions. In my 30-plus years of insurance training, I am noticing that more students are asking questions this year than any year before. To an educator, this is music to my ears. It is often said when classes ask more questions during training sessions, broader comprehension is achieved for everyone. Part of this, I'm sure, is due to the comfort of remote learning. It seems many students seemed empowered when in a remote session. This is a trend I hope continues, as I predict that professional standards will rise as skills rise.

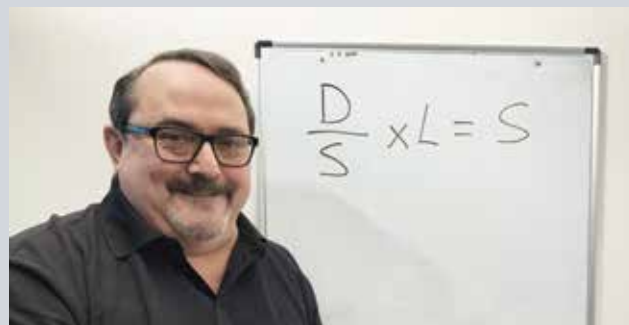
Skill development through the delivery of knowledge in structured designation programs like CAIB and other seminar-type programming will expand broker training opportunities like never before. The virtual seminar can be so much more than a robotic webinar. As a small example of this, I was challenged in late November to provide training on a provincial automobile insurance product. The catch was they wanted delivery before year's end. I took up the challenge. I should say at this point that seminar development is one of my favourite things to do. And, it all starts with my specialty: Research.

I read necessary technical papers and wordings, developed supporting visual aids, wrote a script (using dictation software), loaded this script onto my teleprompter, set up my green screen, shot 57 video segments, and wrote a review quiz. This completed project was off to our editor's home office within 10 days. The potential to have custom education based on local needs will continue to grow as an integral part of professional development. Brokers taking training in areas that do not serve their needs in order to meet regulatory requirements is commonplace. The main reason for this awkward situation is lack of product choice on subject matter. Therefore, we see personal lines brokers taking commercial programs and vice versa. I predict customized regional and local education will become a valuable option for the brokerage industry — and IBAS is already taking its place at the forefront.

2020 brought a shift from pre-pandemic paradigms. There once were days when head offices were downtown, with branch offices sprinkled around market areas. Real-estate costs were high, commuting costs and rush hour stresses loomed large. Then we found ourselves suddenly working from home — perhaps one of the biggest changes of all. Many of the surveys I have seen indicate acceptance of remote working. Studies have shown acceptance of not only employees, but also leaders of organizations. One statistic that surprised

"In my 30-plus years of insurance training, I am noticing that more students are asking questions this year than any year before. To an educator, this is music to my ears. It is often said when classes ask more questions during training sessions, broader comprehension is achieved for everyone."

IBAS, West Coast Training renew CAIB partnership through 2023



IBAS is pleased to announce it has reached an agreement with West Coast Training (WCT) and long-time instructor Todd Hochban to continue delivering Canadian Accredited Insurance Broker (CAIB) Immersion courses to Saskatchewan brokers through the summer of 2023.

Beginning this August, IBAS and WCT will also offer monthly, one-hour *Ask Todd* online study sessions for individuals preparing to write CAIB exams.

"Todd has earned a reputation in the province as a master trainer, with a deep understanding of insurance and what it takes to be a successful broker," says IBAS President & CEO Derek Lothian. "This partnership will help ensure that member brokerages retain access to affordable and effective options to educate and licence their staffs, which is a key priority in our 2020-23 strategic plan introduced this past October."

2020-21 has been a record year in the three-decades-long IBAS and WCT relationship. The shift to online learning prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic has seen registration in CAIB Immersion programs skyrocket nearly 200 per cent compared to the five-year rolling average. All courses since May have been facilitated through Zoom, with class sizes climbing as high as 82 students.

"CAIB Immersion has historically been a classroom-based method of delivery, with both advantages and disadvantages," explains Lothian. "But the ability of WCT to duplicate much of what works in the classroom in a *digital* setting has been nothing short of remarkable. Exam pass rates have remained consistent, the cost of travel for many — especially *rural* — brokerages has been eliminated, and, in a lot of ways, student engagement has actually enriched. That kind of adaptability and innovation sets a great example for brokerages. We couldn't be more pleased to be renewing this partnership at such an important time for IBAS and its members."

The next intake of CAIB 4 Immersion runs March 12 – 19, while the next intake of CAIB 1 Immersion is scheduled for April 17 – 23. Brokerages may be eligible for funding support through the Re-Open Saskatchewan Training Subsidy (deadline recently extended to March 31) or the Canada-Saskatchewan Job Grant.

A special thank you to IBAS's 2021 CAIB programming sponsor: Saskatchewan Mutual Insurance!

“What if that next CSR, data entry clerk, receptionist, producer, or sales manager is in another city or even another province? Think of the size of this new talent pool for recruiting new employees. I predict that recruiting and hiring of new employees will be a provincial or national effort, resulting in strategic accomplishments.”



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many (but not me because I have been working from home since the late 1990s) is that people actually work more hours when they work from home. I can attest to this first-hand. When you work from home, you work every day. There are benefits in meeting face-to-face both for corporate and employee wellbeing, but having to be in the office everyday may well be a thing of the past. I predict that working from home will play a larger role in many organizations, including those in insurance.

Finally, I would like to make one last prediction. This one is likely the most exciting for everyone in every industry, including the brokerage industry.

In all organizations, human resources are critical for success. Finding and hiring the right people is key. Traditionally, searching for talent has been a local hunt, save the occasional extension when filling senior vacancies. If my last prediction of working from home is accurate, then it follows that where my home is located makes little or no difference. What if that next CSR, data entry clerk, receptionist, producer, or sales manager is in another city or even another province? Think of the size of this new talent pool for recruiting new employees. I predict that recruiting and hiring of new employees will be a provincial or national effort, resulting in strategic accomplishments.

So, there you have it: My view from the front of the classroom for 2020. These six predictions are related to my observations. I am sure some of these predictions will be more accurate than others, but they nevertheless show that 2020 was a year of changes and challenges.

To close off this article, I would like to add a personal comment. I know that 2020 has caused all of us to suffer. I hope that your family was lucky enough not to have a family member fall victim to this virus that took so many of us. Nancy and I suffered a loss of a loved family member, so we know the pain some of you are feeling.

2021 is here. We will overcome.

Todd Hochban is the president of West Coast Training, based in Vancouver. He is also IBAS's lead training for its CAIB immersion programs. #



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Bulletin Board

Return to in-person events

IBAS recognizes the important role that face-to-face relationship-building plays in the insurance industry. To that end, we continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation, including the rollout of vaccinations, in the hopes of safely returning to in-person events in 2021. In weighing our options, however, your health and safety will remain our top consideration and priority.

Given the current vaccination schedule announced by the Government of Canada, IBAS is aiming to host two in-person events in 2021 (pending public health conditions and meeting the target of vaccinating all Canadians by the end of September):

- **2021 IBAS Golf Tournament:** We are holding two potential dates: Tuesday, June 15 and Thursday, September 16 — both at The Legends Golf Club in Warman. Regardless of date, should this event proceed, it will likely be under a modified format to align with provincial guidelines and ensure maximum safety.
- **2021 IBAS Convention:** Again, we are holding two potential dates for our marquis event, which is slated for the Sheraton Cavalier Hotel in Saskatoon (both a Thursday and Friday): October 14 & 15 as well as October 28 & 29. Watch your e-mail for further announcements.

Build on your cybersecurity knowledge

The latest e-course from the Centre of Study of Insurance Operations (CSIO) — *Staying Safe While Working From Home: Security Awareness for Remote Workers* — reviews recent research on cyberthreats and outlines best practices that home office workers should follow to protect themselves from attacks.

Led by a senior security expert with cybersecurity firm GoSecure, the course provides practical tips on how insurance professionals can take simple steps to decrease vulnerabilities on their routers, devices, and home networks, as well as actionable advice for employers to help engage their staff in security awareness.

This new offering is CSIO's third course on security awareness. It is part of the organization's comprehensive e-learning program, consisting of 15 free on-demand courses focused on digital topics — each accredited for one CE hour in Saskatchewan. More than 1,200 individuals have already accessed the service, which is free to IBAS members.

New IBAS Leaders Forum kicking off in April

IBAS recently announced the launch of its new Leaders Forum in conjunction with SGI CANADA. Beginning in April, this yearlong pilot program will bring together a select group of brokerage principals and emerging brokerage leaders for facilitated monthly meetings that blend peer mentorship, group discussion, targeted learning, and shared accountability. Each meeting will focus on a topic of mutual interest — often led by an expert guest speaker — and will provide a confidential, constructive environment for participants to navigate the challenges facing their brokerages.

According to IBAS President & CEO Derek Lothian, this is a professional and brokerage development opportunity unlike anything IBAS has offered before.

"This is one of the most exciting projects we've ever undertaken at IBAS," he says. "It's not just about building leadership capacity — it's about creating an ecosystem to nurture the growth of resilient, innovative, and world-class insurance brokerages that will thrive in Saskatchewan communities for decades."

For more information, visit www.ibas.ca/leaders_forum.html or contact Derek directly at (306) 380-3765.

Register Now

Free IBAS e-Learning Opportunities

Virtual Town Hall for IBAS Member Principals

Wednesday, March 3, 2021

Presented by Intact Insurance

Each quarter during the 2021 calendar year, brokerage principals are invited to participate in a special, one-hour 'virtual town hall' with IBAS President & CEO Derek Lothian to discuss the key issues that IBAS is advancing on behalf of its members. This is an ideal forum to get up-to-speed with the latest information and ensure your voice is heard. Derek will also be joined by representatives from the Insurance Bureau of Canada to lead a conversation on the state of commercial insurance. This session is free to attend (open to principals only) and is worth one (1) CE credit.

Introduction to Lean for Insurance Brokerages

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Presented by Red River Mutual

The foundational concept of *lean* is simple: Reduce waste while adding value for your customer. This is not just a methodology for manufacturing — lean has universal applications in an office environment as well, to make your brokerage more efficient and help elevate the customer experience. If you've ever been curious about lean or continuous improvement, you won't want to miss this session — worth one (1) CE credit. Each member brokerage receives one free registration.

Saskatchewan Summit of Young Insurance Professionals

Thursday, March 25, 2021

Presented by SGI CANADA

The summit is back in 2021 as a 100 per cent free, fully digital event! This one-day forum brings together brokers, carrier representatives, adjusters, and other industry stakeholders at similar, emerging stages of their careers for an interactive day of learning and discussion. Speakers include: Joel Baker, President & CEO, MSA Research; Blair Feltmate, Head, Intact Centre of Climate Adaptation; and Tara Osipoff, Founder & CEO, Ayden Creative. IBAS member brokers are eligible to receive four (4) continuing education (CE) credit hours.

State of the Canadian Insurance Broker

Wednesday, May 12, 2021

Presented by Portage Mutual Insurance

Join IBAS President & CEO Derek Lothian as moderator for a 90-minute panel discussion on the issues, trends, and opportunities facing insurance brokerages across the country. Panelists include: Peter Braid, CEO, Insurance Brokers Association of Canada; Colin Simpson, CEO, Insurance Brokers Association of Ontario; George Hodgson, CEO, Insurance Brokers Association of Alberta; and Grant Wainikka, CEO, Insurance Brokers Association of Manitoba. This session is free for all IBAS members and is eligible for 1.5 CE credit hours.

Supporting Your Client in a Disaster: The Broker – Restoration Company Relationship

Thursday, June 3, 2021

Presented by Lydale Construction

This webinar will explore best practices for how insurance brokers and restoration companies can work closer together to deliver value and ensure clients are back on their feet after a disaster with as little headache as possible. The session is free for all IBAS members and is eligible for one (1) CE credit hour.

Technical Courses

Insurance Needs for Home-Based Business Owners

Tuesday, March 9, 2021

Webinar

(\$125 + GST per member)

Products Liability

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Webinar

(\$125 + GST per member)

CAIB 4 Immersion

March 12 – 19, 2021

Zoom e-Delivery

(\$1,050 + GST per member)

Crime & Fidelity Insurance

Tuesday, March 30, 2021

Webinar

(\$125 + GST per member)

Introduction to D&O Insurance

Thursday, April 8, 2021

Webinar

(\$125 + GST per member)

CAIB 1 Immersion

April 17 – 23, 2021

Zoom e-Delivery

(\$900 + GST per member)

Seasonal Homes: What Your Underwriter Wants to Know

Thursday, May 13, 2021

Webinar

(\$125 + GST per member)

To learn more or to register for IBAS professional development programs or exams, visit www.ibas.ca.



INSURANCE BROKERS
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What's trending in 2021?

By Pete Tessier, Host, *TheInsurancePodcast.com*

I recently had the pleasure of presenting at Trufla Technology's *Amplify: BrokerTech Digital Conference*. I was asked to talk about what I see, hear, and understand to be the emerging trends in the insurance industry and how they will be seen and practiced in 2021.

As a podcaster, I try to be neutral. I support all ideas and innovations; however, I rarely, if ever, endorse something. I may like some innovations more than others, but there is never a bad idea — only ones that do not get pursued.

In preparing for the presentation, I looked back at all the guests that had been on the show and realized the trends that needed to be focused on were not specific technologies, people, or companies, but what was trying to be achieved through the various initiatives. With that understanding in mind, I narrowed these trends down to four: *Relationships, efficiency, targeting, and change*.

As consumers and technology evolve, the insurance channel must be more aware of the value and power of *relationships*. My presentation included a slide showing a doctor, lawyer, accountant, and dentist. These are four professionals that everyone relies upon, but the touchpoints with them are often scattered — and as with an insurance broker, they may only happen a few times a year.

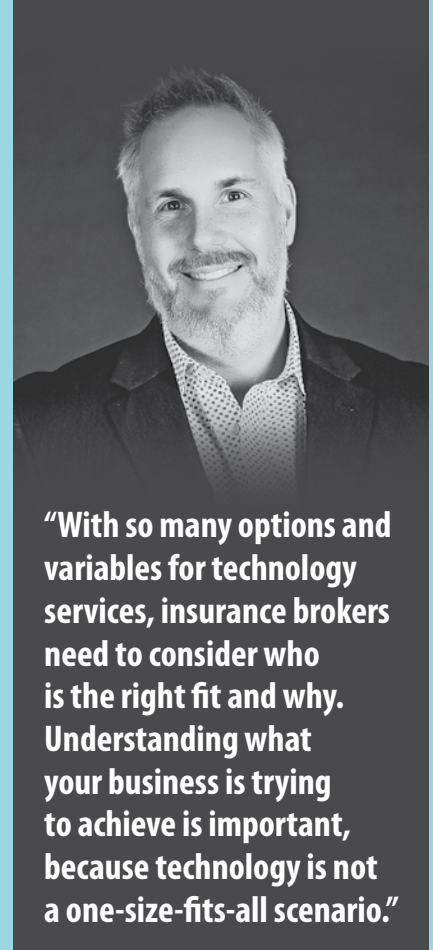
When thinking of indispensable professionals, think of the ones you share the most personal of information with. When was the last time you left one of those providers for a different one? The answer will almost always be the dentist, as that relationship is one-sided. When at the dentist, you cannot talk and can only listen. Insurance brokers need to create value like the other professions do by listening and empathizing, thus establishing their value around a two-way relationship.

The next point was to show who the hardest professional in your life is to leave. I showed a picture of a barber and a hairstylist. Why are these service providers so hard to change from? Because the dynamic is such that they know all about you as they have your attention for 30 – 60 minutes minimum. It's a two-way conversation. That should be the goal for insurance brokers.

While you do your work with a client, what are you talking to them about? How are you integrating your data-gathering questions for insurance into their real-world lives? Your barber or stylist does it, because when you tell them you have your cousin's wedding in the summer, and you have to travel for it, they book you in for an appointment right after the one you are having. They engaged with you and you gave them their next sale. Why aren't we doing that with insurance?

The second trend I focused on was *efficiency*. This is an obvious one given the many initiatives to speed up data transmission and policy issuance between insurers and brokers. The point that was made about efficiency comes from an early podcast guest, Alistair Campbell, and one of the best quotes in the insurance industry: "Insurance isn't just copyable — it's photocopyable." If this is true (and I would say it is), why is it so hard for us to take data, get it into a policy that is essentially the same wordings and conditions as thousands of others, and then get it in the customer's hands?

Another slide on this trend showed two pictures: One with someone at a desk with six arms doing things, and another person choosing a face to represent a satisfied and happy customer. Many assume efficiency is all about delivering more with fewer resources and lower costs, but efficiency should be about the customer experience. It certainly takes a well-tuned back office and team to ensure a positive experience for the front office and ultimately the



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customer. Therefore, efficiency cannot only be measured by what you do in the office but also by how efficiently the business can deliver the best customer experience.

Finally, I used a slide with a picture of the IBAC logo with the statement that insurance brokers are no longer the most efficient anymore. Efficient *what*? Efficient customer data collectors, efficient customer experience makers, efficient customer marketers, and efficient managers of technology. That is where much of the innovation and disruption with insurtech is happening — improving efficiency compared to what brokers have traditionally done. There is a place for brokers, but it is changing.

The third trend I discussed was *targeting*. The visual reference for this was different from what many would assume. Of course, the title slide had a target on it, but the next slide showed a group of people in the shape of a target, a photo of an office tower with 'insurance' on it, and highway signs with 'niche market' and 'general market' as green directional signs. The belief has always been that we have to target the right customers. In an evolving insurance world, though, brokers need to target the right insurance

company partners and the right niche products, or niche product providers, to ensure they are best positioned to serve a variety of targeted customers.

The last slide was a picture of a handshake with one hand as a circuit board and the final point was brokers need to target technology partners, too. With so many options and variables for technology services, insurance brokers need to consider who is the right fit and why. Understanding what your business is trying to achieve is important, because technology is not a one-size-fits-all scenario.

Furthermore, the option to use one set of 'tools' to build and test is often a wise move. As the saying goes: 'Rome was not built in a day' — and neither will a broker's final service solution. Target and learn, then expand and repeat with both customers and partners.

The image used on the slide for the final trend was a road sign that said 'old ways won't open new doors.' And I couldn't think of a better image for the trend of *change*.

Change is the most important trend happening with insurance because so many outside influences are pushing change on, and within, the industry. Change is hard to define, but the pace of change and speed with which insurance entities make decisions has become faster and sometimes more abrupt. Data is allowing decisions to be made more quickly and with more precision, and insurance brokers have to be able to do the same with their businesses.

The most important point I had to make about change had to do with an

acronym for change: *Complacency hates adaptive new growing energy*. I used a few acronyms throughout the presentation to emphasize points, but this one is likely the most important. How an organization manages change can determine its success and longevity as a viable entity. Change leaders are the ones embracing, creating, and driving the 'new growing energy' within a business, and they usually represent about 20 per cent of the people in that business. The people in the middle are the fence-sitters, or followers — the near-60 per cent that see where the momentum is going and pursue it.

On the other end are those embedded in complacency — people who do not like change and believe 'if it's not broken, don't fix it.' And every organization has them — usually about 20 per cent of the staff. When an organization is trying to change, the common belief is that the 20 per cent leading change are okay, they are 'convinced' and find their own way. The attention and energy from management inevitably fall on the complacent 20 per cent who resist change. This group receives all the effort to get them out of their comfort zone and moving forward. Where does this leave the majority, those three-fifths, that could go either way? They see the energy placed on those not wanting change and they start moving in that direction, clogging up the management and leadership teams and essentially preventing change.

The hardest thing about organizational change is that a leadership group must make some difficult decisions about how to ensure change happens

and goals are met. Another phrase to remember is that 'change is never easy' and it comes with difficult decisions. To ensure you manage change successfully, you have to prepare your organization for it and that means knowing the team and creating a team that is aligned with what the industry is doing.

I had four more sections that were personal anecdotes about each trend from various life and business experiences before I finished off the presentation. The final point was based around another acronym: Culture outlives new technology engagement (e)xperiences totally — or *CONTEXT*. Without taking trends and specifics into a *context* for your business, many mistakes are going to happen, which is fine, but some are preventable. In an industry, however, that is being reshaped by technology, no organization will survive without the right culture to meet its strategic goals. There is no technology, marketing, process, or customer system that will survive bad culture.

My final point was to treat your business like beer: Without a good yeast culture, you can't have good beer. And to make a good yeast culture, you have to treat it well.

Pete Tessier is the founder, host, and producer of TheInsurancePodcast.com. He is a past president of the Insurance Brokers Association of Manitoba, a former board director with the Insurance Brokers Association of Canada, and has served on both the General Insurance Council of Manitoba and the SGI Strategic Broker Task Force. 🍺

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Celebrating community leadership

By Kyle Halvorson, Manager, Community Engagement, IBAS

Insurance brokers are woven into the very social and economic fabric of Saskatchewan. They are the heartbeat of our communities, large and small — champions for civic engagement, generous supporters of local causes, and compassionate business leaders, who go the extra mile to provide their neighbours with an unparalleled level of service and support. As an industry, it is imperative we celebrate these positive impacts.

That's why, in 2019, IBAS — in partnership with Saskatchewan Blue Cross — established the annual Community Leadership Award. This award recognizes the outstanding contributions of one brokerage and one individual broker who have gone above and beyond to make a difference in their respective communities.

The recipients for 2020 were announced at the first-ever fully digital IBAS Convention & AGM on October 29. Congratulations to both 2020 recipients on this very prestigious award (see photos on right).

If you know of a brokerage or broker that deserves to be recognized, be sure to send in a short submission when nominations for the 2021 award open later this year. #

Together, we're stronger

Community. This single word means so much to all of us at Saskatchewan Blue Cross. It evokes a sense of belonging, a sense of purpose, and a sense of duty. It's at the heart of who we are, and it has been since we were first founded 75 years ago.

Today, we have a mission to empower our communities on their journey to whole health and wellness, and building community is one of our five core organizational values.

There's a deep sense of meaning that comes from looking out for each other. Our team challenges each other to think and act beyond ourselves, and to help to make our province a better place. Whether that's by spurring local economy by supporting local business members, or by seeking out ways to support

Brokerage Category

Dusyk & Barlow Insurance Brokers (Regina)



Individual Broker Category

Jennifer Spitzig (Lakeview Insurance Brokers, Martensville)



local communities in their areas of greatest wellness need, we make conscious choices every day to help make our community stronger.

It's an honour and a privilege to help recognize those in our broker community who share our passion for giving back through the IBAS Community Leadership Award.

Megan Douglas

Vice President, Customer Relations & External Affairs
Saskatchewan Blue Cross





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We work hard to provide insurance products that meet real needs, and when you tell us your customers need something new or different, we act on it.

After 75 years in business, we've had lots of time to refine the art of service. Let us know how we can help you.



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