ACT Meeting at ACORD LOMA Forum
Communications Work Group Breakout Session – May 5, 2014
Peter van Aartrijk, Chair

Overall Strategy
- What do we like about the ACT communications so far? - Depth and variety of info.
- Need to address materials to different levels/audiences; how people like to consume things – video, etc.
- We can watch for timely topics, respond with an article and drive people back to website for additional topics and tools.
- Spencer Houldin (on Big 'I' Executive Committee): There are some hurdles, like state differences, to smoothly sharing info. In process of long-range plan for Big 'I'. The #1 issue is communication.
- Does ACT need to be rebranded?
  - The name change gets interesting when you take the technology out of it. Look at BP – it's such a huge part of what the association does. Need to make more of it. Lisa Parry-Becker gave the example of "SignOn Once" being so much more attractive to agents than "ID Federation."
- Pete vA asked if there should be a gatekeeper of info. Response is to have direct link to marketing communications staff so they can push to agents on timely basis. Another response: Some things are not applicable for every carrier. Might not have technology to support all messaging.
- Spencer H indicated that the Big 'I' can give the ACT Committee time on the next Young Agents committee agenda to talk and get feedback.
- For more participation, maybe have program for referral or other incentive program.
- Idea: Encourage carriers to sponsor an agent for participation in events.

Website
- Lisa Parry-Becker; She was surprised at number of marketing reps who visited Real Time site (GetrealTime.org) to learn about the topic. Asks if this ACT Communications committee can provide that type of education.
- We need to organize info the way people need to see it, not the way we think it should be organized.
- What else do we need to do? Catalog info on current site. Maybe use Groupsite (www.groupsite.com) to organize info. Review ACT communications and determine what we need and don't need anymore.
- Clean up ACT website.
- Question: Are we able to track the traffic on ACT site—what are people reading?
  <TO- DO FOR COMMITTEE> Note: If converting to an IIABA format, we would be able to track traffic to a degree. Investigating.
- Is the Big I website responsive? Not at this time, but Peter vA shares that the association is working on new site.
- What topic areas does the ACT website need to clearly list? (ex: ACT Admin, Articles, Education, Video library, Events, etc.)

Communications

- Be more particular about what we send. Carrier members share experiences about mining data and being selective about messaging—so people don't "turn off" to messaging. Carriers are getting metrics.
- Question on how ACT e-mail is sent. Need to segment?
- ACT, vendors, and carriers have created so much content; we're almost there. Need to focus on how to disseminate.
- Would be nice to have signup for what materials people want. Big 'I' identified the related problem and next step is how to solve it. Opt-in e-mail or RSS request, for instance.
- Peter vA: ACT really wants to work on what we are sending people. Folks really liked social media policy that was sent – useful and not technical. With content range, we can get a lot farther in things like best practices – not promoted enough and shared.
- Communication at the right time is also important. Key is to get marketing reps more engaged and well versed about what is available to agents and to share with them.
- "It's a lot harder to preach a short sermon than a long sermon." – need Executive Summaries of longer papers; info is sometimes hard to find.
- If info is not consumable and measurable, it's not effective. Example of improved rendering of content – slick infographic that drives readers back to site.
- Question: what system is used to send out ACT info? Answer: e-mail. But push technology is a thing of the past. Must shift to identify needs and pull information from audiences.
- Peter vA says state-based pubs are going well – use ACT material regularly. Wide variety of publications. Loyal readership.

Media, Social

- What about video? Should ACT produce a video series on relevant topics? Pete has told Madelyn he can go to big I office and help manage. Question: How successful are ACORD videos? Acknowledge ACORD audience is different.
- Spencer H mentions AM Best and its video promotion. Lisa Parry-Becker mentions Jason Cass series. Ron: Also, the Insurance Journal "On Point" podcasts.

Suggestion to take the video series and originate at state associations. To get state associations more engaged, maybe originate video series from state association HQ. Another suggestion; theme-based "shows," like ID Fed initiative. *Note: Ron Berg and Jim Armitage are doing this right now for the IIAB Cal. Working with IIAB Cal to see if this can be re-branded for other state's use. Interest from several states.*

- We find that when you do research on a topic, you can take that outline and repurpose 3-4 ways to hit all the media people are using – video, infographic, twitter, etc. The hard work is in assembling the content—easy part is then sharing it. Pete encourages us to think about what else we can do to share the info – beyond the traditional monthly e-mail.
- Better use of social media would be more effective than a monthly e-mail. Has to make sense for audience. Peter vA asks if ACT should have a main social medium. Discussion shows some carriers sill have limits on social media use.

Other/Misc

- Marketing Reps are "disconnected." MSA rep says committee should help carriers educate field staff so they're comfortable enough with the info that they can share it with agents.
Lisa Parry-Becker: Part of Marketing Reps' performance evaluations is whether they have these conversations in agents' offices.
- Paul (Fuller?): There seems to be a disconnect within Big 'I', but ACT is part of Big 'I'.
- Spencer H related about how consumers report auto claims to Chubb – only 8 percent of consumers do it electronically; 60 percent call.
- Trade association annual events might be good for ACT road show.
- ACT has produced great content. To get people to give ACT more credit, ask for list of top ways ACT has improved your life. Reminder of value of ACT Membership.
- For presentations at ACT meetings: PPTs = boring?
- Maybe suggest meetings be more interesting – less PPT, more live speakers. Show success stories of tech companies from 5 years ago. Also, look at agent participation numbers compared to the past.
- Peter vA mentioned Mark Harrison – twenty-something; came out of State Farm. Got to independent agency and influenced agency to become top commercial download agent in country by going desktop to desktop. Wasn't rocket science; was a commitment to Real Time and a consistent workflow.
- Lisa Parry-Becker: Do we need a checkbox list for agents to indicate what they use and then have carriers "grade" them on what they use. EMC shows agents what they are not using.
- Agency makeover "show" is needed (like a Reality show). Similar to 'Wife swap', have a tech-savvy agency employee goes to non-techy agency, & vice-versa.