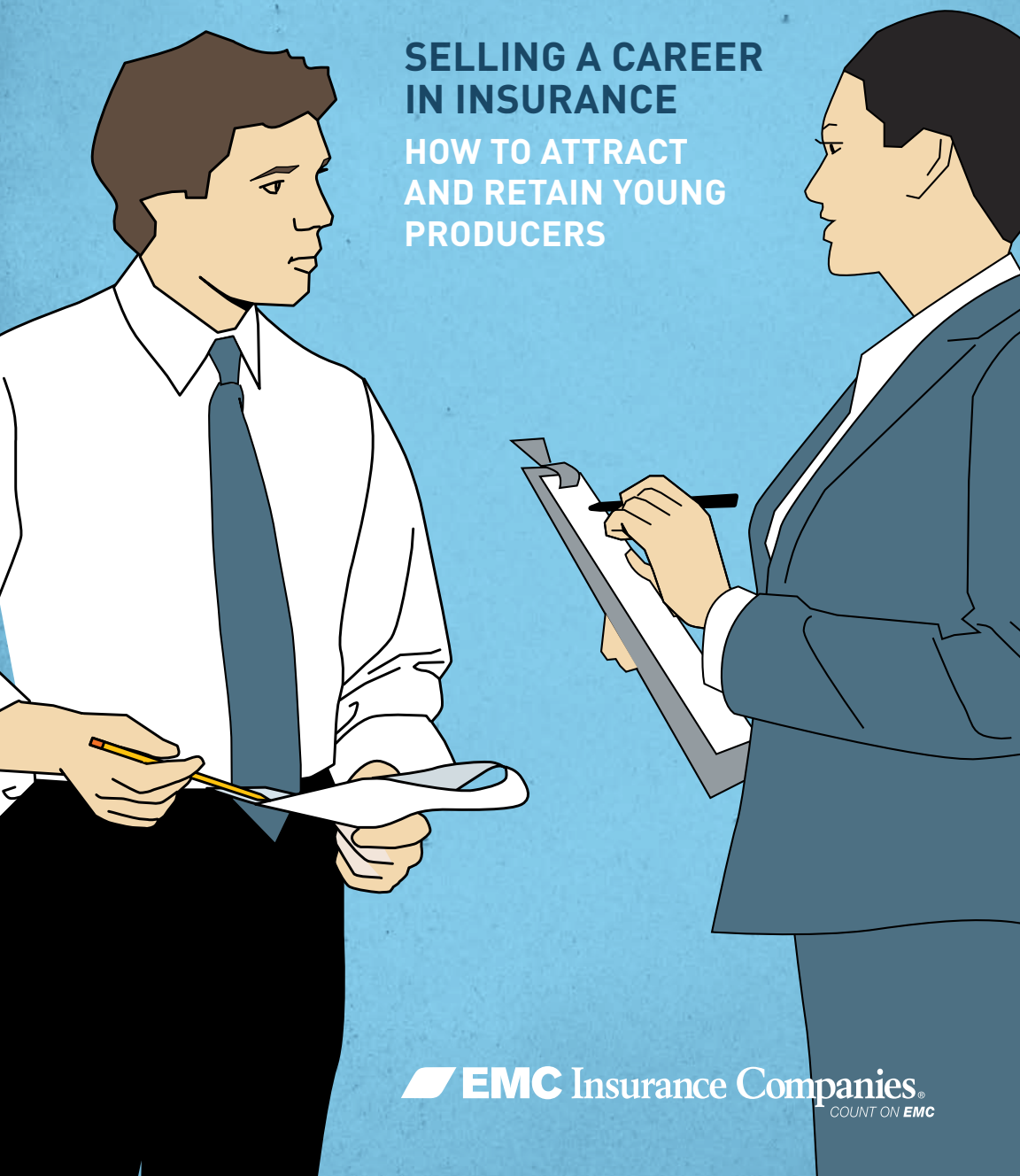


# Cooperator

SUMMER 2011

## SELLING A CAREER IN INSURANCE

HOW TO ATTRACT  
AND RETAIN YOUNG  
PRODUCERS





## We're celebrating our 100th year by planning for our next 100 years.

Tanya Wentzel, Des Moines Branch Marketing Manager  
Troy Boysen, Minneapolis Branch Commercial Underwriter  
Connie Jarzynka, Omaha Branch Claims Adjuster

Emails and teleconferencing may be time-savers, but there is no substitute for the one-to-one relationships with insurance professionals who know you and your community. Whatever the future holds, insurance will always be a relationship business and EMC will continue to keep those relationships as close to your office as possible.

 **EMC Insurance Companies.**

Home Office: Des Moines, IA | 800.447.2295



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

## from the editor



**BRUCE G.  
KELLEY**

### **WE KICKED OFF OUR 100TH YEAR WITH AN OUTSTANDING AGENT RECOGNITION EVENT IN MAUI.**

It was a time to thank agencies who grew profitably with us in 2010 and celebrate our centennial. It was also an opportunity to share some comments on our past, present and future.

It was gratifying to see a lot of familiar faces in Maui, but I was pleased to see some new and younger faces. Our industry is aging, and it's important to grow with the next generation of producers. In this issue of *Cooperator*, you'll learn how internship programs, mentoring, social media and other strategies can help your agency attract and retain young talent. You'll also read how insurance organizations can enhance your agency's training efforts.

While investing in young talent is critical to the future of our industry, maximizing the investment you've made in technology is also key to your operation. We've asked our business technology analysts to offer some valuable tips on making the most of real time and/or download. They also identify some emerging technology you should watch out for. The technology article is based on their experience with various industry-wide technology organizations and user groups.

As always, *Cooperator* is packed with timely loss control and coverage information you can share with your policyholders. You'll also find several news items about EMC products and services that can help your agency grow.

On the final page, is information on next year's agency recognition trip to The Cove Atlantis, Paradise Island. I hope to see you there as we celebrate your success in 2011 and kick off the first year of our second century.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce G. Kelley".

Bruce G. Kelley, CPCU, CLU  
President and CEO  
EMC Insurance Companies



# do your clients know?

Here is some information to share with your clients about preventing losses, making better use of the resources available from EMC and enhancing the value of their insurance protection.



## WATCH FOR LIGHTNING THIS SUMMER

Most people associate June and July with warm summer weather, but these two months are also the most severe for lightning. Approximately 90 million lightning bolts strike the United States each year and cause approximately 30,000 business fires, more than 400 personal injuries and 30 percent of all power outages. Lightning is also responsible for more deaths and property losses than tornadoes and hurricanes. As the prime season for lightning approaches, EMC loss control professionals

encourage policyholders to develop a lightning protection system to protect buildings, occupants and contents from the thermal, mechanical and electrical effects of lightning. You'll find several Tech Sheets about lightning protection in the Loss Control section of [www.emcins.com](http://www.emcins.com).

## ONLINE CLAIMS REPORTING IS EASY

Policyholder Access on [www.emcins.com](http://www.emcins.com) gives your customers quick, secure access to their EMC personal insurance information. Should they ever experience a loss to their home, auto, motorcycle or dwelling,

they can easily report their claim online.

Once they are registered for Policyholder Access, customers can click **Report a Claim** on the right side of the homepage, select the policy for which they wish to report a claim, and then we'll walk them through the process. Only the most basic information is needed to report a claim online; however, providing additional information may help EMC process the claim faster. Once the claim is submitted, the policyholder is contacted by an EMC claims adjuster, and his/her insurance agent is notified.





### PRINT SAFETY POSTERS ON DEMAND

Safety posters have always been free for EMC commercial policyholders, but now they can get these helpful tools faster than ever before. EMC customers can download all of our posters as high-resolution PDFs that can be printed instantly from their computers. More than 30 posters are available to choose from on topics ranging from preventing slips and falls to proper use of safety equipment—many are in both English and Spanish. Posters are available in the Loss Control section at [www.emcins.com](http://www.emcins.com).

### TIME FOR A DISABILITY INSURANCE CHECK

Would your clients suffer financially in the event of a disability that kept them out of work for an extended period of time? May is Disability Insurance Awareness Month, the perfect time for a disability insurance reality check. Disability insurance provides an income to your clients and their families if they are unable to work due to illness or injury. EMC National Life Company reminds you that your clients' most important asset is the ability to earn an income—not their cars, homes or other possessions.

EMC recommends that policyholders contact their agents if they suffer a severe loss; are uncertain about their insurance coverage; want to submit a claim on a policy other than personal auto, motorcycle, homeowners or dwelling, or have general questions regarding their claim.

## 100 WAYS OF GIVING

In celebration of our 100-year anniversary, EMC Insurance Companies and the EMC Insurance Foundation are distributing up to \$200,000 to nonprofit organizations in communities near our branch offices. Selected top EMC agencies are choosing one nonprofit organization to participate in the 100 Ways of Giving program. The

EMC Insurance Foundation will select approximately 100 nonprofits—based on merit—to receive up to \$1,000. Each nonprofit receiving a grant will have its profile on [www.CountonEMC.com](http://www.CountonEMC.com) for the 100-day voting period, July 1-Oct. 8. During that time, each nonprofit can campaign for votes for their organization. At the end of 100 days, the four nonprofit organizations with the highest combined scores from the EMC Insurance Foundation and public votes will each receive a \$25,000 grant. EMC invites all agents to celebrate our 100-year anniversary by giving back to our communities.

WHAT'S  
OUR  
BIRTHDAY  
WISH?  
**TO  
GIVE  
AWAY**  
**\$200,000**

# *Selling* **A CAREER IN INSURANCE**

YOU'VE BUILT YOUR REPUTATION BY SELLING INSURANCE, BUT TO BUILD THE FUTURE OF YOUR AGENCY, IT'S TIME TO SELL YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ON BECOMING AN AGENT.

When was the last time you heard a young person say, "When I grow up I want to be an insurance agent." Yet, when a young professional discovers the rewards of working as a producer, he may soon find himself saying, "I'm proud to be an insurance agent." That was the case for Grant Shepard of Holmes Murphy & Associates in Dallas, Texas.

“ RECRUITING YOUNG TALENT SHOULD BE PART OF EVERY AGENCY’S BUSINESS STRATEGY. ”



As a political science major at the University of Texas, Shepard had no idea what an insurance agent did or how commercial insurance was sold. A chance meeting with an insurance company at a college fair changed what he knew. After several years of working as an underwriter on the company side, Shepard made the transition to a producer for Holmes Murphy & Associates, where he is enjoying a rewarding career. There are thousands of young professionals like Shepard who have the skills your agency needs. The challenge for most agencies is to find them, attract them to the business and retain them.

### MAKE RECRUITING AN AGENCY FUNCTION

Recruiting young talent should be part of every agency's business strategy, according to Dale Van Dam of M3 Insurance in Waukesha, Wis.—an agency that adds two to three young producers each year. "We commit to that mission in our budgeting process and reach out to young professionals and train them once they get here." For Tom Dawson of Dawson Insurance

“**BEING ABLE TO CREATE YOUR OWN DESTINY IS A STRONG MESSAGE THAT SEEMS TO RESONATE WITH THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS.**”

in Fargo, N.D., young talent is the livelihood of the agency. "Too many agencies are not prepared to take it to the next generation because they don't start the process of grooming new talent early enough." Finding young talent is a year-round job for Craig Schroeder of A.W. Welt Ambrisco in Iowa City, Iowa. "We're always looking for good people to put in the pipeline, so when we have an opening, we have a person ready to join our team."

### WHERE TO LOOK FOR YOUNG TALENT

Successful agencies use a variety of methods to find young talent. Start with local colleges and universities by attending college fairs, offering internships and posting openings with the school's career

*continues on page 8*

## TIPS FROM THE YOUNG PRODUCER STUDY

The recently published *Young Producer Study: Attracting and Developing the Best Young Talent in the Industry*, from Reagan Consulting, offers the following tips when hiring young producers:

- The best recruiting tool will be the success of other young producers the firm has hired in the past.
- Young producers can motivate and stretch the performance of existing producers, becoming a positive influence on an agency's culture.
- To be successful, agencies often have to make the commitment to hire multiple young producers—not just one.
- When a young producer hire is not working out, agencies should quickly recognize the problem for the benefit of the firm and the individual, and address the problem or accept that it is not a good fit.

For additional tips and more insights on attracting and developing young producers, download a copy of the *Young Producer Study* at [www.reaganconsulting.com](http://www.reaganconsulting.com).





## TAKE SOME TIPS FROM EMC'S INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

This summer, nine college students will work as interns in various areas of EMC's Home Office and Des Moines Branch. For some, it could be the beginning of a promising career with EMC. How can you structure an internship program to groom young talent for your agency? "An internship program is a win-win situation for your agency, the students and our industry—make the most of it," says EMC's Senior Employment Specialist Maureen Olson, PHR. Here are some tips from Olson, who oversees the company's internship program.



**PARTNER WITH LOCAL COLLEGES**—Work closely with schools in your area that teach business and/or insurance courses. Offer to be a guest speaker on the topic of insurance. Post your internship opportunities on their job posting sites. Continually provide information to instructors about your agency and the insurance industry. You may even want to work with high schools in your area to get younger people interested in pursuing insurance as an area of study when they go to college.



**STRUCTURE YOUR PROGRAM**—Don't make your intern an errand and/or filing person. Be prepared to give interns meaningful work that relates to their major areas of study. EMC's internship program includes job shadowing, participating in online training and informal mentoring.



**CHECK WITH LOCAL BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS**—Your local chamber of commerce may offer networking opportunities for your interns to gather with other interns in the area. Be sure to invite interns to any insurance organization meetings you may be attending while they are working for you.



**EVALUATIONS**—Schedule performance evaluations to let interns know how they are doing and ask for their feedback on their experience. At EMC, we schedule performance reviews halfway through the program and conduct an exit interview when the internship ends.



**EDUCATE STUDENTS ABOUT THE INDUSTRY**—Many interns don't understand the many career possibilities within the insurance industry. Take the time to introduce them to the various areas within your agency, as well as the companies you represent. You'll also want to point out the many outstanding benefits associated with working in the insurance industry.

Maureen Olson  
Senior Employment Specialist  
EMC Insurance Companies



## SELLING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS ON A CAREER AS A PRODUCER

### WHAT IS THE KEY MESSAGE YOU TELL YOUNG PROFESSIONALS TO ATTRACT THEM TO THE AGENCY BUSINESS?

We posed this question to a select group of agents who are always looking for new talent for their operations, and here is what they had to say:



WOLFE-DANIELS AGENCY  
INSURANCE & REAL ESTATE

"In addition to earning potential, this is a career that provides a good work-life balance plus the added benefit of networking with insurance professionals throughout the country."

#### JOHN BRAUT

WOLFE DANIELS AGENCY, INC.  
SCOBEEY, MONTANA

*John is past chair of the Montana Young Agents Committee and currently sits on the InsurPac Board of Trustees as the YA representative.*

## Northeast NEBRASKA

INSURANCE AGENCY

"I talk about the same thing that got me interested in a career

as a producer—the freedom to be an independent businessperson and earn an income based on your ability to produce."

#### DAVE HECK

NORTHEAST NEBRASKA INSURANCE AGENCY  
SOUTH SIOUX CITY, NEBRASKA

"Right now a big selling point is the stability of the insurance industry.

For starters, everyone needs insurance, so you'll always have customers. Secondly, if you take care of those customers, they will take care of you, today and in the future."

#### DARYL JOHNSON

BROWN-MCNERNEY-JOHNSON  
DES MOINES, IOWA



*continued from page 6*

placement office. "Don't forget to use your internal resources," suggests Van Dam, who relies on referrals from employees, customers and carriers to find young talent. Other agencies are tapping into the power of social media to connect with prospective candidates around the country.

### SELL THE SIZZLE

"Let's face it, most college graduates don't see insurance sales as a very sexy profession," admits Van Dam, who focuses on the consultative role of the insurance agent when talking to college graduates. "Being able to create your own destiny is a strong message that seems to resonate with the young professionals," says Schroeder.

### TRAINING IS THE KEY TO RETAINING

Effective recruiting is an investment in your agency's future. This investment pays off when you add a structured training program for young producers. Whether you employ directors of professional development, have informal mentoring programs or rely on carriers and insurance organizations to augment in-house training, it is important to give young agents the knowledge and support to succeed.

### IT'S STILL THE SAME OLD STORY

"During recent years, there has been considerable controversy concerning the ability of the insurance industry to attract college graduates." Sound familiar? That was the opening sentence of a 1957 article that appeared in the *Journal of Insurance*. More than 50 years later, agencies are still struggling with the challenge, but through strategic recruiting, creative selling of the profession and meaningful training, there is hope for the future. Just ask Grant Shepard and the hundreds of other young producers around the country who are proud to be insurance agents.

## Using External Training To Develop Agency Talent

**According to the *Best Practices Study*, the most successful agents and brokers tend to hire from outside of the insurance industry. This puts added pressure on agencies to provide meaningful training. EMC Director of Employee Development Alison Cate offers some suggestions on how agencies can seek training assistance from external sources.**

Like most agencies, EMC Insurance Companies faces the constant challenge of training new employees about the insurance industry. Professional development is particularly important to Gen Y employees (usually identified as workers under the age of 29) who want meaningful work and a solid learning curve. From our experience, the following professional development programs offered through various insurance organizations seem to fit the bill.

### ASSOCIATE IN GENERAL INSURANCE PROGRAM

This program is ideal for someone relatively new to the insurance industry. The courses provide a comprehensive knowledge of insurance principles, practices, policies and coverages. An ethics component was recently added to the program. For more information, visit [www.aicpcu.org/comet/programs/ins/ins.htm](http://www.aicpcu.org/comet/programs/ins/ins.htm).

### ACCREDITED ADVISER IN INSURANCE PROGRAM

Newer agents will benefit from this program, which will help them increase

their commission, improve their insurance knowledge, avoid E&O claims and earn continuing education (CE) credits for their license renewal—all at the same time. For more information, visit [www.aicpcu.org/flyers/AAI.htm](http://www.aicpcu.org/flyers/AAI.htm).

### CERTIFIED INSURANCE COUNSELOR (CIC)

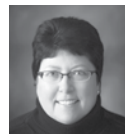
This is the most practical insurance education program on the market for young producers. After successfully passing each of the five exams—personal lines, commercial casualty, commercial property, life & health and agency management—participants are conferred as CIC designees. For more information, visit [www.scic.com/courses/CIC](http://www.scic.com/courses/CIC).


### VISIT EMC


I also would recommend you augment any formal training by encouraging young agents to visit the companies you represent. EMC branch offices welcome new producers to gain a better knowledge of the company and develop a stronger face-to-face relationship with the people with whom they will be working. Contact your local EMC branch office to arrange a visit.


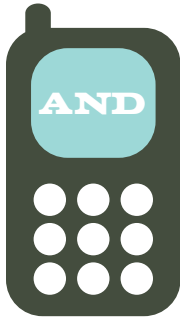

As the 2010 *Best Practices Study* noted, in the most successful firms, training runs the life of employment. The key is to start the educational process early in an employee's career to keep his/her enthusiasm and productivity at the highest level possible.

Alison Cate  
Director of Employee Development  
EMC Insurance Companies



**maximizing**  ←

**AGENCY TECHNOLOGY** 

**TODAY**  **AND**  *in the* **FUTURE** 

BY TERESA ADDY AND SARA RICHARDS, CPCU

**BY HAVING ATTENDED NUMEROUS INDUSTRY TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCES AND REGULARLY PARTICIPATING IN INDUSTRY TECHNOLOGY USER GROUPS, WE HAVE BECOME AWARE OF A SURPRISINGLY POWERFUL TECHNOLOGY TOOL THAT CAN DRAMATICALLY INCREASE YOUR AGENCY'S EFFICIENCY. INTERESTED?**

Here's the surprise. Most of you have already invested in the technology. It's your agency management system.

Like most technologies, agency management systems have been updated and enhanced over the years. Today, these systems are capable of doing much more than ever before. So why do we still hear from agency staff who can't seem to find enough time in the day to accomplish their work? If this sounds familiar, we encourage you to maximize the full potential of your agency management system.

To help agencies determine the time-saving capabilities of their agency management system, the ACORD-User Groups Exchange

(AUGIE) created an online Time Saver Calculator. The calculator helps identify and measure the benefits you could realize by implementing real time and/or download, two connectivity services that can significantly streamline sales and service for agencies. The calculator is customized to measure the time it takes to conduct a variety of agency-to-carrier transactions to measure their impact on your agency efficiency. Visit <http://augie.artizan.com/Realtime/index.htm> to access the calculator. Your information will be kept completely confidential and will be aggregated with other users' information in summary format.

**HELP SHAPE TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY**

Utilizing the resources of AUGIE and the technology services available are a few ways you can impact the technology improvements that carriers and vendors will make available to you in the years ahead. Participating in a user group is an even better way. Having a diversity of agencies represented in these groups assures new technologies will be of value to agencies like yours. Better yet, being part of a group is

a great way to network with peers who are eager to share best practices with you.

As members of the various industry organizations, we welcome your participation in the following groups:

- **ACT (Agent Council for Technology)**— Established by the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America in 1999, ACT brings agents, carriers, vendors and user groups together to focus on agency productivity, internet marketing and agency security. For more information, visit [www.iiaba.net/act](http://www.iiaba.net/act).
- **AUGIE (ACORD-User Groups Exchange)**— AUGIE unites people from all across the industry—from independent agencies and brokerages to multinational carriers and solution providers—to identify workflow inefficiencies within the industry and to find resolutions. For more information, visit [www.acord.org/augie](http://www.acord.org/augie).

These two groups and their websites are great places to start learning more about maximizing the use of technology in your agency.

Technology is changing the way insurance is bought, sold and serviced. As your advocate in various industry organizations, EMC is committed to advancing technologies that bring increased efficiencies to your agency and your customers. We encourage you to join us in this endeavor by making the most of the technologies available to you today and participating in the development of new technologies.

Sara Richards, CPCU, and Teresa Addy are business technology analysts for EMC Insurance Companies. They work with agents and branch offices to assure that all parties are informed about current information on maximizing agency technology.



## FIVE TECHNOLOGY TRENDS WE'RE WATCHING

THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE TRENDS TERESA AND SARA ARE MONITORING ON BEHALF OF EMC AND ITS AGENTS

### 1 MOBILE APPS AND MOBILITY

We expect to see an expansion of mobile apps and the use of mobile devices to streamline the writing and servicing of insurance from the field.

### 2 EVOLVING AGENCY WEBSITES

Agency websites are becoming more than a place to share information. They are becoming a cornerstone of the agency operation, and agents and customers will want the same functionality they have on a carrier's site on their agent's site. The adoption of social media tools are also increasing as a way to drive traffic to agency websites.

### 3 EMAIL SECURITY

More states are adopting laws to assure a secure transfer of online information. For the past several years, EMC has been using Transport Layer Security (TLS) to achieve that goal. Agencies need to check with their system administrator to make certain they have the same capabilities.

### 4 REAL TIME CONSISTENCY

Agents are noticing some inconsistencies in how different carriers deliver real time services. ACT is developing best practices to assure agents of a consistent level of speed and quality in their transactions with carriers.

### 5 E-SIGNATURES

As more agencies and companies move to paperless environments, e-signatures will become the standard.

### EMCNL Sales Contest: Driving Success

Have you ever thought about attending one of the four major championships in golf —The Masters, The U.S. Open, The British Open or PGA Championship? Imagine the thrill of walking Augusta National Golf Club, sporting a Masters badge and watching the world’s best golfers. Let the EMC National Life “Driving Success” contest make it a reality with a \$1,000 cash prize.

Submit your life applications—online or on paper—for your chance to win \$1,000 cash. Use your cash prize to attend one of the four majors, take a trip to your favorite golf resort, buy new golf clubs or spend it however you choose. **The 10 agents with the most paid\* life production credit between March 15 and June 30, 2011, will each win a \$1,000 cash prize.**

Complete contest details can be found on the agent website at [www.EMCNationalLife.com](http://www.EMCNationalLife.com). If you need help logging in, contact the call center marketing specialists at 800-232-5818 (press 131).

\* Issued workplace business is considered paid for this contest. Annuities are not included in this contest.

### Agency Survey Headed Your Way

How easy is it for you to do business with EMC Insurance Companies? We’d like to know, so we hired Deep Customer Connections, an independent research organization, to survey agents about their satisfaction with EMC products and services. Your input is important to us. Please take the time to complete the survey when you receive it. Your answers are completely confidential.

### Top Ten Bond Agents

Congratulations to the following agencies who topped our list for bond producers in 2010:

|                                    |                    |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Willis North America, Inc.         | Denver, CO         |
| Universal Business Insurance, Inc. | Sandy, UT          |
| Cashion Company                    | Little Rock, AR    |
| Lockton Companies, LLC             | Kansas City, MO    |
| HUB International Southwest        | Grand Junction, CO |
| BancorpSouth Insurance Services    | Little Rock, AR    |
| Rich & Cartmill, Inc.              | Tulsa, OK          |
| Dohn & Maher Associates            | Palatine, IL       |
| Flood & Peterson Ins.              | Greeley, CO        |
| HUB International Scheer’s Ltd.    | Westmont, IL       |

Remember, you can *Count on EMC*® to respond to your needs for a wide variety of bonds, including contract, rapid, court, fidelity, public official, and license and permit bonds.

### SHARE YOUR COMMENTS AND NEWS WITH EMC

Feel free to send us any comments about the articles in this issue of *Cooperator*. We’re also interested in hearing what topics you would like us to address in future issues. More importantly, we’re interested in your news. News about agency accomplishments. News about community projects in which your agency is involved. News about new programs that are working for your agency.

Join us in making *Cooperator* a place to share information from which we can all benefit.

Send your comments to [cooperator@trilixgroup.com](mailto:cooperator@trilixgroup.com)

# CELEBRATION DESTINATION



*Myth & Magic*  
THE COVE ATLANTIS

It's almost mythical. Definitely magical. This place called Paradise Island. It seems like an entire world away from life's everyday demands. The island is really more a lifestyle. Spirited and serene. Invigorating and inviting. Paradise Island is the ultimate reward for your outstanding performance.

**JOIN EMC, MARCH 6-11, 2012, WHEN WE CELEBRATE YOUR DRIVE  
AND SPIRIT IN A PLACE WHERE MYTH AND MAGIC MEET.**

**EMC**  
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