If you can dream it, you can do it. Always remember that this whole thing was started with a dream and a mouse.”

Walt Disney

Creating a Culture of WOW through Self Service

A Different Way of Thinking

Ask the majority of insurance brokers why they exist and you’ll likely be riddled with answers that fall into the categories-making a profit, selling policies, and servicing people.

That said, why you exist as a company may very well determine your future as an insurance broker.

Think of it this way; if Disney simply believed he existed to create animated characters, movies or amusement parks he likely would have been focused on maximizing profits, sales and service like everyone else in business. In fact – these outcomes are simply a by-product of his WHY.

Disney exists for one reason – to keep the magic of childhood alive.

Putting the customer at the center of Why You Exist, and having it serve as a filter for what you do is a concept pioneered by Walt Disney. He used his customer centric approach to build an empire.

At Excalibur we exist for one reason - to champion people in their time of need, and our customer experience is fueled by a culture that supports risk-taking, surprise and delight. Existing to champion people isn’t driven by increasing quotes and selling policies– for us growth is simply a by-product of why we exist as a company.

We’re not in the insurance business, we’re in the experience business.

If we are not continuously stretching ourselves to think differently and champion the experience customers want, we have failed our purpose.

Existing to champion people in their time of need, has also shaped our beliefs and actions when it comes to challenging the status-quo in the insurance industry. We’re fully committed to finding new ways to apply technology in the effort to make life easier and eliminate frustration – even when it requires us to be pioneers. New technologies are not perceived as a threat to our existence, but rather as an opportunity enable and engage customer.
Why Online Self-Service is Critical

When I speak to other agents about why we need to own the online movement as brokers, I often hear the following two comments:

“If I give my clients self-service options then I’m putting myself out of a job.”

Which isn’t accurate because they’d still be your client, and if you don’t give them self-service options they’ll choose to be the client of someone who will. Then you’re definitely out of a job.

“I don’t believe my clients want to be serviced on line, that’s why they deal with agents.”

One of the biggest carriers in Canada recently sent out a memo to brokers about their 5 client segments, demonstrating that 28% said they use an agent because they don’t want to use the internet. That said, by not creating an online experience you’re dismissing more than two-thirds of your potential market.

Another 19% said that they trust their broker and the options they provide – which begs the question, why not create an online experience to champion their needs since they already trust us?

The remaining 53% of the market is interested in self-sufficiency. That is troubling for brokers. Many agents can’t service those needs because they have yet to create a seamless online quoting process. Or worse, some brokers refuse to change what they are doing – because they’ve adopted the ‘head in the sand’ approach.

Like every other category (travel, music, movies, banking) the number of people looking for an online experience is growing exponentially. Insurance companies have built competing models to go after the segments agents have been neglecting for years. At Excalibur, we think it’s time for Agents to push the envelope and compete for those clients as well.
At Excalibur, we believe that clients should be able to do business the way they want to – it reduces friction and creates an experience worth sharing. To date, our efforts to surprise and delight potential and existing customers have focused on 3 key areas.

**Online Learning**
Regardless of how people want to buy their insurance, customers want to know they’re making an informed decision. Our philosophy is that every question we get asked (face-to-face, email or phone) should be answered online so that we become a trusted advisor across all mediums.

If someone is asking questions online – we want to be the ones they find.

**Excalibur University**
We created ‘Excalibur U’ as our online vehicle to make learning about insurance simple and fun. Using a combination of SEO friendly blogs and videos we help answer questions that potential customers may be asking, with the added objective of communicating our brand’s personality. We also create a bi-monthly newsletter, a monthly e-blast which drive interaction with our existing customers.

Our goal is to allow people to learn the way they choose in an online environment. The more questions we answer online, the greater our potential to touch people we have yet to interact with or meet.

**Aiden - Online Responsiveness**
If it’s 6pm on a Sunday and you have an insurance question you want to ask - we’d like to be in the position to help.

That’s where Aiden has the ability to surprise and delight.

Aiden is our continuously evolving chatbot and is programmed to answer a wide spectrum of our most frequently asked questions. In some cases, this eliminates the need for customers to wait for office hours, sit on hold, or lookup a number.

We use three versions of Aiden to meet people wherever they are. One version is for our Website, one for online auto and home rating software, and one for messenger. With our chatbot people get directed at the start on the website to get a quote, make a change, file a claim or ask a question. Aiden has the ability to capture information and email it directly to our CSRs for follow-up and service.

In the future we will be connecting our chatbot using an application program interface (API) to our agency management system. We will also be connecting to our company system so clients can do real-time banking, file a claim etc.
Here is the activity our Aiden handled through our website over the last month so you can see how busy our chatbot has been working as an integral part of our team.

### Excalibur Stats

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<th>Service Request</th>
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July 1, 2017 - July 31, 2017

#### Online Quoting, Binding & Purchasing

While Aiden helps users get to our quoting platform - the quoting experience is delivered using our integrated Rate Reducer and InstaShield software programs.

Statistically an average of 70% of the sales process has been completed before the consumer wants to talk to an agent. We’re working to make that process as friction-free as possible. We’ve also seen an increasing number of consumers who prefer to make their purchases online without speaking to an agent.

Our solutions range from a quick 4 question quote estimate, to a fully issued policy on some products.

#### AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE QUOTE

Select your questionnaire preference

- [Instant Quote](#)
- [Quick Quote](#)
- [Detailed Quote](#)
Rate Reducer

Our Rate Reducer software allows potential and existing clients to shop and compare premiums with multiple companies for Auto, Home, Tenants, Condo and Motorcycle Insurance. The transparency of premium comparison not only saves time, but also invites interaction and often creates direct engagement with our team of Excalibur Defenders. We offer online shoppers three different experiences to price their insurance – Instant quote, Quick Quote and Detailed Quote. Some clients want a quick estimate, while others want more specific information - we champion both.

It should be noted that in Ontario brokers are still required to validate the coverage, contact the client and verify the information for most products. We do use digital signature to make the binding process easier for the client, then we upload the information into our company portals and issue the policy manually. In the future, we envision that the binding and issuing process will be completed instantaneously online for more lines of business.
InstaShield

For certain insurance lines we also give clients the option to quote, bind, and issue their own coverage. Clients complete the application online, pay for the product, and a policy is emailed to them, the insurer and to us.

In surveying clients who called us, or went on line and filled out forms - we have found that 85% of consumers want to get instant feedback on rates. Over time the number of products we offer with this service will continue to expand.
Online Self Service Options

Once clients are in the door, online self-service accelerates our ability to add value to their experience by increasing convenience and mobility. The options we’ve created are built upon the idea of making sure the customer has the tool they need, no matter which part of the customer journey they’re on.

Many clients just want to go to your website and make a change. Some clients have never had to make a change, or have procrastinated setting up the mobile application and on Sunday morning at 11:00 realize they need to make a change to their policy but can’t.

At Excalibur, we developed an Online Self-Service section on our website which allows customers to initiate their own changes.

It allows people to submit changes outside of regular working hours that can be processed by our staff during the next working day. This service also works as a trigger for creating interest in our mobile app, which has the ability to further simplify future needs.
Mobile App

Our mobile app gives customers instant access through their smart phone without the hassle of looking up and logging into the site.

Push technology allows messages to be sent to clients that pop up in the mobile application – which makes it easy for our team to send policy renewals, newsletters, birthday greetings, weather alerts or even vehicle recall messages that can be sent directly to the client’s phone.

While it currently has many functionalities, like the rest of our self-serve options we’re planning to add more as they become available.

Integrating Self Service into Your Experience

So what else needs to done to integrate self-service into your customer experience?

It’s important to remember that while technology is important, it’s designed to be integrated with and compliment the services you already offer. At any point in the cycle your team must be able to jump in and interact with the self-service tools to assist clients. Additionally, where self-service tools send information to staff for review or completion, standards are required to monitor accuracy and response times.

Having a robust online experience also creates greater opportunities for feedback and continuous improvement. As your clients interact with and give you feedback on your tools your team will need to work with vendors and insurance companies to improve the experience and functionality. API’s should be built to connect your chatbot, mobile app, and portals to the company systems. If a client wants to see how their claim is going they should have an access window to get up to speed quickly.

At the end of the day – here’s the fundamental questions we should be asking ourselves:

Does your customer experience give clients the ability to do business the way they choose?

Does it ensure that their interactions with you are as simple and low friction as possible?

Does it give them instant results?

Does it inspire attachment to you as a brand?

Disney understood that giving the customer an unforgettable experience happened by design, not chance.

Jeff Roy - CEO
Excalibur Insurance Group