

Cutting Through the Noise

How to Win Insurance Business
When Prospects are Distracted

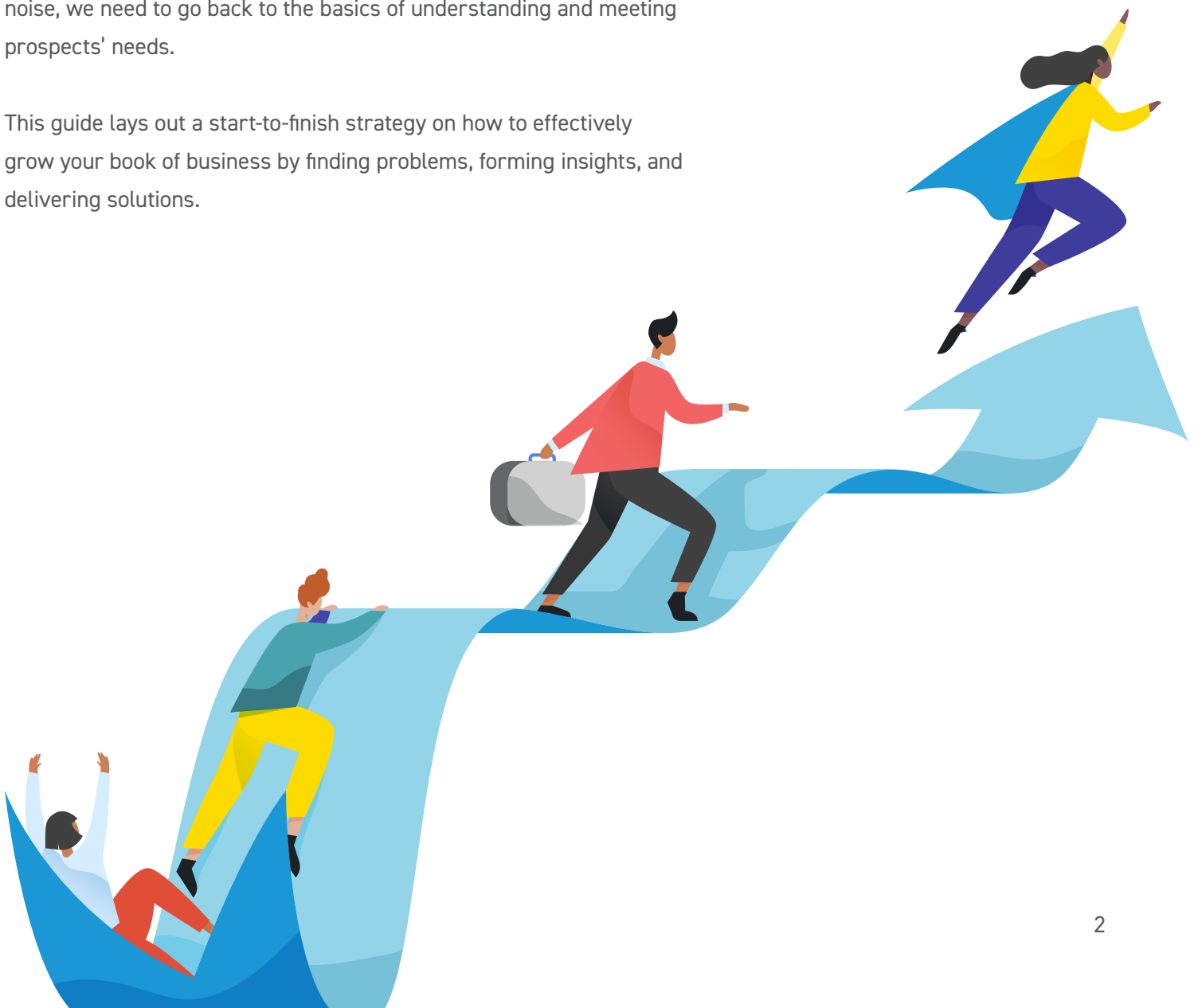


Introduction

Organic growth was challenging enough, but now it's even harder. Employers are highly distracted with today's challenges. Prospects have a lot of choices in the market. Options to schedule in-person meetings are limited.

Fortunately, there's a way forward. The most effective strategies to engage distracted prospects aren't unfamiliar. To cut through this noise, we need to go back to the basics of understanding and meeting prospects' needs.

This guide lays out a start-to-finish strategy on how to effectively grow your book of business by finding problems, forming insights, and delivering solutions.



1 Find the pain point

A pain point is

a persistent problem that causes annoyance or inconvenience.

There are two types: active, and latent. A prospect is aware of an active pain point, but unaware of a latent pain point. Both are costs that make prospects' lives more difficult.

With a little research, however, you can discover both. You want to do this because people tend to seek relief when they know there's pain.

Industry

Different industries will have different pain points. For example, transportation typically will have health and safety and employee retention pain points,¹ while nonprofits will have strained resources and be behind in adopting technology. Often, a simple search query like "2020 HR challenges in x industry" produces a wealth of results.

Location

Because it's likely you will have ownership over a certain region or area, focus on the states your prospects are in. As you know, each state will have insurance regulations, but also a slew of state laws that prospects need to comply with as they pass. Keep tabs on laws that are likely to burden employers.

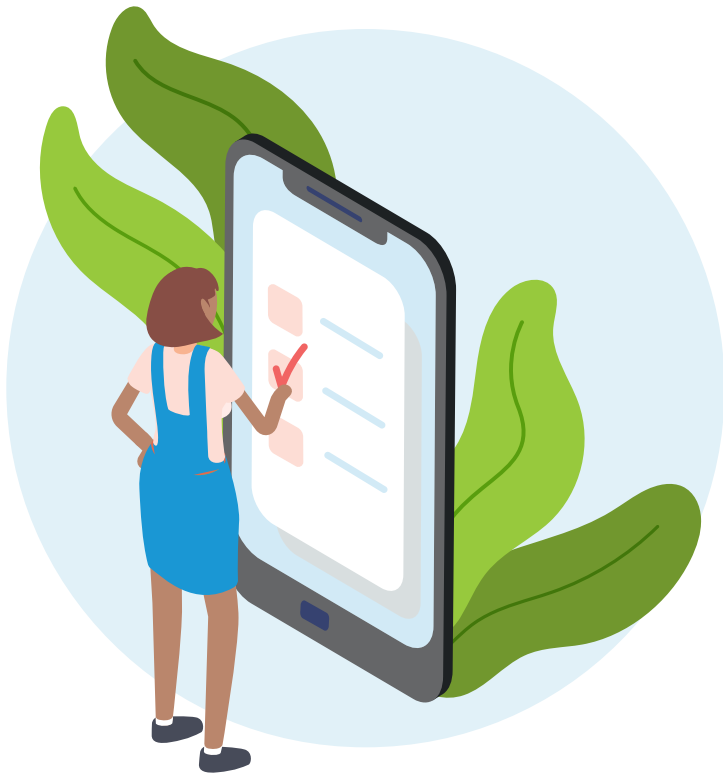
Employer size

An employer's size influences their internal dynamics. For example, ThinkHR research shows that leaders at smaller employers have multiple job functions that can bog them down. Alternatively, medium-sized employers become more concerned about employee engagement as they grow. List pain points unique to different-sized employers.

Behavior and Attitudes

We like to think that we know how our prospects act or what they think, but history and research shows that we typically don't. That's because we often don't have the tools to understand our prospects' behavior.

A great start is looking out for survey results and reports that companies release, oftentimes for free, that give you information about a prospect or group of prospects. It gives you a more holistic view of what's going on than an individual response to an inquiry. And it's a more efficient use of your time.




ThinkHR, for example, publishes a wealth of knowledge about the pain points of small-to-medium employers. Here is what we've found recently:

- 1 ThinkHR survey data shows that compliance with state and federal laws has been the number one challenge employers have faced in 2020 and 2019.²
- 2 ThinkHR platform data shows that on the day-to-day level, (1) employment laws (2) health and safety, and (3) handbook and policies were the most popular topics that employers brought up to our HR advisors.³
- 3 ThinkHR experts have identified lawsuits, culture harm, disengagement, and poor mental health to be imminent risks of employer inaction.

2 Find the risk of loss

If a pain point is the problem, then risk is the potential exposure to loss that can happen without doing anything about it. For example, if a prospect's pain point is keeping up with new legislation or regulations, the risk is that they could be out of compliance, potentially leading to fines, lawsuits, or bad press as the bad outcome.

There are a variety of ways to understand risks and their potential outcomes. Industry reports, like those published by Hiscox, are one way. Another is asking peers, risk experts, or even lawyers what they've seen happen. A simple way could be to leverage your own expertise and ask "if nothing is done to address this pain point, what could happen to my prospect?"



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Why lead with risk?

Behavioral psychology has shown that people are more likely to act to avoid a risk than to gain a benefit. This is called loss aversion bias. By informing prospects about risks that matter to them, they are more incentivized to act as a way to avoid them. Producer Coach Frank Pennachio sees it constantly play out among insurance prospects.⁴

To learn more about what motivates and engages prospects, check out Frank's webinar ["How to Boost Client Engagement with ThinkHR Technology"](#)

3 Connect to solutions

Just like pain points, solutions are wide ranging. But if you do the research, it should be clear which products or services you have available to directly address your prospects' pain points and explain why.



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Why HR, Compliance, and Safety Solutions?

With a constantly changing HR and compliance landscape, and events like the pandemic, there will be new issues that challenge employers. But unlike an unused travel credit benefit or a cold and distant EAP, HR and compliance solutions are at the heart of a small business's success. More than ever, employers will need legal guidance, expert opinions, and strategies to support their staff to continue to thrive in an unpredictable world order.



4 Create an insight


Once you know prospects' pain points, the risk of loss that could arise from them, and a viable solution, combine them to make an insight. An insight is a deep understanding of something. With insight comes power, and it has largely been untapped in the insurance business.

It's easy to think of why. For years, brokers have been able to survive on running quotes and renewal options. But now, everyone (including computers) can do that and with significantly more solutions than before. All those options prevent prospects from differentiating what's good for them and their business. This has been called "choice overload," and as a result, paralyzes decision-making.⁵

However, people still listen to opinions. Especially when those opinions speak to their needs and wants. Insights do that. Brokers who leverage insights can cut through the noise and present themselves as less of an agent, and more of an advisor.

"Agencies that are client-centric and place their customers first with every operating decision stand to deliver more noticeable impact and results. This differentiates them from the competition."

Joy Justus, Senior VP, ThinkHR



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For more ideas on how to create a compelling dialog with prospects, watch Joy's webinar ["Grow Your Book in 2020: Showing Value to the C-Suite"](#)

5 Understand the point of contact

Once you've created some golden nuggets of insight, you want to figure out who you plan to talk to. For employers, there are five main personas you will want to talk to about benefits or insurance depending on their motivations and goals

Human resources want to:

Take care of employees

Reduce administrative burden

Save time

Discussion point: the day-to-day

Financial officers want to:

Ensure business sustainability

Control costs and expenses

Drive revenue growth

Discussion point: growth and sustainability

Risk managers want to:

Control exposure to risk

Avoid accidents/claims

Promote a safe workplace

Discussion point: hazard prevention and abatement

Compliance professionals want to:

Avoid penalties, lawsuits

Protect the organization

Not be seen as a "cost center"

Discussion point: enterprise-wide compliance

Owners (for smaller organizations)

want to:

Grow the business

Identify and prioritize roadblocks

Protect against compliance risk

Discussion point: you can't do it all



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6 Communicate the insight

Now you're ready to communicate insights to your target prospects. To be effective, keep the following in mind as you craft your communications:

Context

Because your insight will be new and powerful, it also needs to be tethered to something your prospects are already familiar with. It's more likely to catch their eye. This is called context.

For example, it could be an upcoming renewal of their contract, a current event, or a new state law that you know is top of mind for them. Additionally, recall what you know about your prospects, such as times of year when they're busy, their preference for email or meetings, and what you've talked about in the past.

Goal

Finally, you want to have distinct goals in mind when reaching out to prospects with insights.

With your first communication, your goal is to get an **agreement** from your prospect where they acknowledge or appreciate that they indeed have a problem and need to fix it. It may take a few attempts, and a couple of insights, but the connection you forge will separate you from your competition.

After having a conversation or two, you will want to present a **plan**, which maps out how your solutions solve the pain point. Then after discussion, make a **commitment**, which specifies which solutions you will offer to that prospect.



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Conclusion

Admittedly, cutting through the noise with insights takes some work. But it's worth it, especially when employers are reevaluating their short- and long-term needs as a result of 2020 events. By first digging into pain points and analyzing risk of loss before connecting to your solution, you can engage your prospects in impactful, and strategic, ways.

How ThinkHR can help

ThinkHR deeply focuses on the needs of employers. We use our internal expertise, cloud-based technology, real-time data, and valued input from our users to intimately understand and support small employers at every stage.

To learn more about how ThinkHR helps brokers engage their prospects and drive success

Visit our [Insurance Brokers page](#) or [request a demo of our solutions](#).



¹ (2020). "Transportation [Industry Impact]." ThinkHR.

² (April 2020). 2020 HR Technology & Benefits Report. ThinkHR. Found at http://pages.thinkhr.com/rs/276-KTW-573/images/THR-MHR_TechBenefitsReport.pdf.

³ (October 2020). "Top 9 HR Questions of 2020." ThinkHR. Found at <https://pages.thinkhr.com/rs/276-KTW-573/images/Top%20%20HR%20Questions%20of%202020%20Whitepaper.pdf>.

⁴ (September 2020). Pennachio, F. & McCullough, J. "How to Boost Client Engagement with ThinkHR Technology." Found at <https://thinkhr.wistia.com/medias/a4rvjc8g1s>.

⁵ (October 3, 2017). "When Are Consumers Most Likely to Feel Overwhelmed by Their Options? [KelloggInsight]" Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University. Found at <https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/what-predicts-consumer-choice-overload>.