

Setting a new pace in the disability arena with strategic, targeted marketing

The client

In the eternal battle of need versus speed, Disability Insurance Services' Principal, Daniel C. Steenerson, has time and again eluded his competitors with a higher bar, faster service, and continual innovation.

Steenerson began his insurance career over 25 years ago as a brokerage representative for a large life company. In 1997, he established Disability Insurance Services, Inc., a wholesale operation that represents the disability products of the nation's leading carriers.

Today, Disability Insurance Services (DIS) is the fastest growing and most recognized force for premier disability products. Steenerson attributes his success to a five-part personal formula: working with relentless urgency; respecting and appreciating team members; hiring the best talent; continually reinventing; and requiring impeccable attention to detail.

The challenge

Over the years, Steenerson had tried a variety approaches and found e-mail marketing to be a cost-effective means for reaching new brokers. While he was generating normal industry lead ratios, he felt certain he could do better. After a comprehensive search, he contacted Heather Sloan at insurancecopywriting.com and requested a free Selling Power Analysis. Steenerson was intrigued by Sloan's recommendations and decided to put them to the test in the following week's e-mail. **He more than doubled previous response rates.**

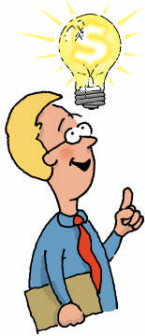
The real work

Convinced that he'd found the right partner, Steenerson contacted Sloan to begin a comprehensive re-branding campaign to include an updated web site, broker kit,

Anatomy of Success – What Went Right

1. **Daring to be different.** In an industry that's chock-full of stuffiness, the DIS campaign stood out as relatable, approachable and likable.
2. **Committing to a Unique Selling Proposition.** The campaign positioned DIS as the educational/informational provider – “DI for Dummies” you might say. While price and service are secondary values, the campaign consistently leads with D.I. Dan teaching.
3. **Branding consistently.** DIS didn't create one piece and stop, leaving its broker audience to uncover an inconsistent experience. Instead, it audited and refreshed every touch-point – from voicemail to brochures to sales scripts. Now anyone who interacts with the company knows what it stands for.
4. **Using offers and baby steps to move prospects through the sales cycle.** While white papers may seem boring, they prompted a lot of response for this info-hungry audience. It's much safer to request a white paper than it is to place a call. The DIS sales team personally followed up with every lead generated.
5. **Showing instead of telling.** D.I. Dan is the professor of presentation prowess. His materials never go forth shouting “We're the best.” But his audience gets the message loud and clear with the expertise that explodes from every communication.

Real work, continued ...



brochure, trade booth, voicemail script, articles, e-mail and direct mail campaigns. He explained, "Heather's insurance experience made it really easy to get a lot of marketing done quickly. She was spot-on with her advice."

Sloan and Steenerson brainstormed re-branding ideas and decided to implement an informational/educational USP built around a likeable character, D.I. Dan. D.I. Dan was positioned as everyone's favorite, down-to-earth disability pundit. The new look and feel was intentionally clean, simple and understated. In Steenerson's words, "Many agents perceive disability insurance to be complicated and difficult to sell. My goal is to break down that barrier by showing them how easy it can be. It was important that all of our materials be uncluttered and unpretentious." Sloan wrote all copy using a casual, personal tone – often in the first person – to help readers feel relaxed and at ease.

The results

One of the first measurable deliverables was a new "DI Deciphered" e-mail campaign. Sloan created a series of 10 informational e-mails that counted down the top 10 things agents needed to know before they sold their next policies. The brief, postcard-style e-mails featured two quick paragraphs followed by a white paper offer.

Steenerson had only three words to describe the results, "I am amazed!" Followed by three more words, "Thank you, Heather!" He explained, "**We found that by following her advice, our e-blasts started generating 430 percent more leads than we experienced in the past.** Needless to say, we're most satisfied and happy that our paths have crossed. So we again, we have but three words ...well, you get the picture." What is possibly even more amazing is that DIS has recycled those e-mails over the past year and they continue to generate high response each time they run.

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The future

Those who know Steenerson and who are acquainted with his company will tell you that his personal and marketing formulas are on the nail. He accomplishes more in one day than most people achieve in a week, with his own upbeat brand of super-contagious energy and ideas. The charismatic and sage D.I. Dan is quickly winning the attention and earning the business of brokers nationwide with his uncomplicated approach to disability insurance. In fact, DIS' toughest competitor has paid him the ultimate compliment of copying his approach with its own DI coach. Never fear – Steenerson won't be resting on his laurels. He's already busy planning his next reinvention.

To learn more about Steenerson or his company, visit www.diservices.com. To get your free Selling Power Analysis, contact Heather Sloan at www.insurancecopywriting.com or by calling 503.342.6420.