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Announcements

Marketing and Distribution Section Seeking Product Development Experts for Two Initiatives

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As part of its recent change in focus, the Marketing and Distribution (MAD) Section has undertaken two initiatives which require specialized assistance. The first of these is to identify individuals with expertise and/or a common interest in various areas related to **marketing and distribution**. The topics under consideration are widely varied—bank distribution of annuities, teleunderwriting, outsourcing, data mining, to name a few—but all address particular aspects of bringing a product to the market. The section isn't interested in defining the list of topics completely, as it is hoped willing professionals will come forward with pertinent topics not yet considered. All that is asked from these volunteers is a willingness to spend five-10 minutes on the phone discussing the emerging issues in their area of expertise. The goals of this initiative are to keep abreast of issues by allowing knowledgeable people to point the direction for discussion in a particular field, and to create informal

networking groups of individuals with similar interests and expertise.

The second initiative addresses the **broad product development process** that surrounds actual product design and pricing. The Marketing and Distribution Section is planning to conduct a survey of industry professionals who are responsible for overseeing all the steps necessary to bring a product to market. We want to discuss topics like how (or whether) underwriting is folded into the product development process, strategies companies use to decrease time to market, frustrations that continually crop up during the implementation phase, how different companies manage systems and leverage technology, how innovative product ideas are generated, who makes the go/no go decision on what to price and what to ultimately sell, and many other similar issues. Any topic or issue that is pertinent to bringing a product to market (aside from the design and pricing) is of interest. It is expected that these interviews will provide a rich set of topics, issues and insights that will both provide and guide content for future newsletters, seminars and research. The section hopes to complete a small number of initial interviews/surveys this summer with completion of the project by fall.

The section would be glad to have volunteer experts for either of these initiatives. Potential partners should contact MAD Section council member Rob Stone at rob.stone@milliman.com or chair Van Beach at van.beach@towersperrin.com. □