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CHAIRPERSON'S CORNER

By Andy Ferris

Recently the Marketing and Distribution Section Council, its friends, and other volunteers have been very active in bringing you content to support our mission and to address the specific topics our members mentioned in the member survey conducted earlier this year. I wanted to take this opportunity to describe some of these initiatives that are currently underway, and to solicit your thoughts and opinions for future initiatives.

Our mission is to foster research and innovation in distribution methods for financial services products and in the interrelationship of marketing strategies with product design, underwriting and operations. In support of that mission, and as a means of hearing the specific topics that are currently of interest to you, the Section Council conducted a member survey earlier this year. We solicited your opinions and level of interest on a variety of specific topics, issues and trends. In response, you indicated strong interest in the following:

- Marketing and Distribution Trends and Issues—in particular those around agency, Internet distribution, direct response, and bank distribution.
- Electronic Commerce Trends and Issues—including aspects such as electronic applications and signatures, electronic and automated underwriting processes, electronic policy delivery, and maintenance.
- Combination Products—including life insurance and annuity products combined with long-term care and other benefits.
- Middle Market Product Needs and Opportunities—including recent product and distribution trends in this space.
- Product Management—including product portfolio rationalization and product development process improvement.
- Underwriting Trends—including traditional medical and non-medical underwriting as well as newer processes using electronic and related



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underwriting methods.

- Distribution Economics—including latest trends for distinct P&L measurements for manufacturing and distribution.
- Generational/Life Stage Marketing and Product Trends—including related marketing segmentation efforts and market research insights.

In support, we have a variety of initiatives underway including the following:

- We have partnered with LIMRA to jointly sponsor an intriguing research project titled Impact of Environmental Change on Products and Distribution, with results to be summarized in Session 97 of the SOA Annual Meeting and a subsequent webcast.
- Our Section has been the lead sponsor for the research project titled Underwriting Mortality Risk Utilizing Electronic Tools, with the results of the second phase of that project to be summarized in Session 15 of the SOA Annual Meeting and a subsequent webcast.
- We're currently developing and evaluating ideas for potential additional research projects in 2011.
- For the upcoming SOA Annual Meeting scheduled for October 2010 in New York, we've planned and organized a variety of additional breakout sessions spanning the topics our members mentioned in the member survey.
- We've planned a series of webcasts on a variety of topics including webcast presentations of our ongoing research projects as well as additional topics suggested by our MaD section members.
- The council members are discussing potential partnerships of various forms with other non-actuarial organizations.
- We've established a Linked-In group titled, "SOA Marketing and Distribution." Please join our group to participate in our timely informal discussions of Marketing and Distribution topics!
- And a wide range of smaller initiatives, all aimed at delivering unique "Marketing and Distribution" content to our members!

In addition to the formally advertised sessions that we've assembled, the Section Council has scheduled a half-day working session at the annual meeting to plan for future activities of the Section Council. For that session, we'd welcome participation by anyone who is interested in getting involved with the Section Council activities. There is no requirement to be formally elected, as your mere interest in learning more about volunteer opportunities in the Marketing and Distribution Section is all that is needed! And please join us for the social events we've organized, including the Wine & Cheese Reception and the Hot Breakfast

session for additional related discussions.

In closing, we continue to welcome and encourage our members to continue to contact any of the Section Council members directly via e-mail or phone with any suggestions or ideas you may have for our Section. Some of you have contacted us to offer excellent suggestions or volunteer for specific tasks, while others have inquired about participating more regularly as a friend of our Section or potential future council member. We encourage those activities to continue and look forward to seeing you at the SOA Annual Meeting in New York!

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