

Insurance

BUSINESS

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TOP

PRODUCERS

The country's 100 best
producers revealed

2017

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meet insurtech
disruptors head-on

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in the fast lane

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the skies – and they
need insurance policies

COVER STORY: TOP PRODUCERS

TOP PRODUCERS 2017

Discover the 100 producers who are leading the insurance pack

FOLLOWING AN overwhelming response from producers across the country, the nominations for 2017's Top Producers were culled into this list of 100 of the industry's top-performing professionals. To celebrate those producers who rose to the top of the pack, this year's list

also features the Platinum Producers Club, which gives special recognition to producers with books worth \$3 million or more.

So what does it take to be a Top Producer in 2017? This year's winners come from all walks of life and all regions of the country. Experience

counts, but it's not everything: Nearly 44% of our Top Producers have been in the business for 10 to 25 years, while 24% have been in it for less than 10 years. Impressively, two of this year's Top Producers made their mark on the industry in under five years.

TOP PRODUCERS INDEX

COMPANY	PAGE	NAME
Acentria Insurance	42	Chuck Jennings
Acentria Insurance	41	Kendall McEachern
Acentria Insurance	43	Kevin Mason
Acentria Insurance	48	Shawn Budney
Advanced Comp	40	Fielding Dickey
AHT Insurance	36	Peter Dean
AHT Insurance	39	David Schaefer
AHT Insurance	33	George Forrester
AHT Insurance	34	Jamie Madonna
AHT Insurance	33	Mark Ganley
AHT Insurance	40	Michael Tomasulo
AHT Insurance	34	Ned Sander
Arthur J Gallagher & Co.	44	Bob Gorman
Arthur J Gallagher & Co.	26	Daniel R'bibo
Arthur J Gallagher & Co.	31	David E. Schwave Jr.
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.	51	Iva D. Giddiens
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.	47	Justin Dove

COMPANY	PAGE	NAME
Arthur J Gallagher & Co.	30	Marcia Hahn
Arthur J Gallagher & Co.	34	Mark Gresser
Arthur J Gallagher & Co.	50	Michele Centeno
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.	30	Mark Purfield
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.	51	Peter Reilly
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.	32	Richard Terlecki
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.	50	Scott Wightman
Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.	48	Tyler LaMantia
Atlantic Insurance Group	34	Stephen Milwicz
Atlantic Insurance Group	49	Steve McDonald
Baldwin Krystyn Sherman Partners	50	Matt Hammer
Bolton & Company	36	Jonathan Schreter
Bolton & Company	44	Matt Chase
Bouchard Insurance	44	Eric Beck
CAL Insurance & Associates Inc.	28	Joseph DeLucchi
Cook Maran & Associates	36	Brian Scrocca
Dean, Heckle & Hill Inc.	28	Richard Heckle

COMPANY	PAGE	NAME
Diversified Risk Solutions LLC	30	Paul Gaglioti II
Donald F. LaPenna Associates Inc.	42	Donald LaPenna
Donald F. LaPenna Associates Inc.	40	Michael DeStasio
Eagan Insurance Agency	38	Christopher F. Trapani
Eagan Insurance Agency	34	Marcus Eagan
Eagan Insurance Agency	48	Zachary Fanberg
Esser Hayes Insurance Group	30	Tamara Knight
Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance Inc.	27	Brian Johnson
Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance Inc.	32	David McKinnon
Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance Inc.	37	Jason J. Young
Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance Inc.	47	Jerry Horner Jr.
Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance Inc.	46	Jim Armstrong
Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance Inc.	33	Robert C. McLendon
Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance Inc.	32	Rod Hurston
Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance Inc.	42	Sam Sackler
Foundation Insurance Group Inc.	52	Patricia Hartness
Frank H. Furman Inc.	51	Robert P. Foote

COVER STORY: TOP PRODUCERS

MICHAEL DESTASIO

The Insurance Centers/Donald F. LaPenna Associates
Iselin, NJ

Michael DeStasio is EVP at The Insurance Centers by Donald F. LaPenna Associates, where he oversees its transportation division. He is part of the Professional Insurance Agents of New Jersey [PIANJ] and currently serves as director for the New Jersey Young Insurance Professionals, a PIANJ affiliate. Previously, DeStasio was an intern in Travelers' construction department, where he was exposed to the underwriting side of the industry, which helped him develop a clear understanding of how key insurance professionals – agents, underwriters and risk managers – work together to effectively address clients' needs.

J. TRENT HUNT

Logan Lavelle Hunt Insurance
New Albany, IN

Logan Lavelle Hunt Insurance Agency traces its roots back to 1919 with the founding of Lavelle Insurance Agency; it became Logan Lavelle following a merger in 1996. A year later, Trent Hunt joined the firm as a partner and has been part of its New Albany, Indiana, office ever since.

After completing a degree in marketing and forensic studies at Indiana University-Bloomington, Hunt pursued a career in insurance, where he has accumulated 23 years of experience. He is a past board member of the Home Builders Association of Southern Indiana and was named the 2010 Associate Member of the Year for the Southwestern Indiana Home Builders Association.



MICHAEL TOMASULO

AHT Insurance
Jersey City, NJ

Having worked with hundreds of companies to place directors & officers liability insurance, Michael Tomasulo now leads the management liability practice group at AHT Insurance.

"D&O and management liability appeals to me because there's nothing cookie-cutter about it," he says. "It's a small, specialized industry, and very few people fully understand it. It's important to craft each package specifically for the client."

Prior to joining AHT in 2010, Tomasulo was a senior vice president and team leader at Aon Risk Services; he was also a founding member of the NASDAQ Insurance Agency, NASDAQ's own full-service insurance brokerage, where he was responsible for the East and Central regions until he assisted in the sale of the agency to Aon.

Tomasulo is also a regular speaker at conferences such as the ROTH Capital Conference and Marcum Microcap Conference on topics such as IPO readiness, up-listing, Reg A+ and governance.



JED DERSHIMER

Suhr Risk Services
San Jose, CA

A trusted advisor with Suhr Risk Services, Jed Dershimer started his career in human capital management at ADP. Now, as a certified risk professional and certified workers' compensation specialist, Dershimer provides his services to a range of industries, including nonprofits and professional services.

Outside of the office, Dershimer is an active member of the Northern California Human Resources Association and is a two-time Volunteer of the Year Award recipient from Community Options, a nonprofit that helps people with developmental disabilities.



FIELDING DICKEY

Advanced Comp
Lakeland, FL

Fielding Dickey oversees Advanced Comp, a subsidiary of Acentria Insurance and a highly specialized agency with a risk management platform that uses a multidisciplinary approach to effectively lower workers' compensation costing.

Dickey first joined the industry as a loss control professional with a national workers' compensation carrier after earning a degree in criminal justice at Florida Southern College. Outside of his duties at Advanced Comp, he is active with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Lakeland and Mulberry.



KENDALL MCEACHERN

Acentria Insurance
Destin, FL

A risk and insurance specialist serving the real estate and construction industries, Kendall McEachern holds a well established position in the Southeast market. His team has arranged coverage for more than 400,000 multi-family units and 4 million square feet of commercial office space and real estate. McEachern is co-founder and CEO of Acentria Insurance, and also serves as chairman for Tower Hill Insurance Group's Agency Council.

Prior to founding Acentria, McEachern held various leadership roles at Insurance Office of America. Under his leadership, the company's Destin office was recognized as the fastest-growing and most profitable office for four consecutive years. Outside of insurance, McEachern's involvement in the community includes actively participating in his local church and in the American Heart Association, for which he has served as chairman.

COVER STORY: TOP PRODUCERS

MICHAEL MONTAG

MGM Associates Insurance
Penfield, NY

In 1984, Michael Montag founded MGM Associates Insurance in hopes of becoming a truly effective independent agency. He quickly grew the business into what it has become today by following the mission statement “large enough to service you, small enough to care.” He clearly has met that goal: In an article written for the company’s 30th anniversary, Montag described the company as “the smallest of the large agencies, but the largest of the small.”

MGM was named an IIABA Best Practices Agency from 2007 to 2012. Montag continues to train the next generation of insurance professionals to build relationships with clients, especially those who are still not ready to get policies off the internet because they require more nuanced advice that only a broker can provide.

MIKE PEPLINSKI

Harding Brooks Insurance Agency
Liverpool, NY

Michael Peplinski started his career in the banking industry at HSBC Bank, but after 10 years, he decided to move into the more personal, client-driven field of insurance, where he quickly found that the repossession industry was his forte. Today, Peplinski is vice president of Harding Brooks Insurance Agency, the largest agency specializing in repossession insurance, which insures more than 300 collateral recovery companies nationwide.

To build his business, Peplinski has partnered with the repossession industry’s largest trade association, the American Recovery Association. He is also the preferred insurance agent for other national and state associations. In 2016, Peplinski started an exclusive repossession insurance program for Harding Brooks clients, the only A-rated nationwide repossession program.

DONALD LAPENNA

The Insurance Centers/Donald F. LaPenna Associates
Clark, NJ

One of the largest insurance agencies in the country, Donald F. LaPenna Associates, operating under the name The Insurance Centers, is a full-service agency that specializes in business insurance coverage, as well as benefits, estate planning and financial services. At its helm is Donald LaPenna Jr., who has more than three decades’ worth of experience in the industry and thousands of national and regional clients in his portfolio. He has managed a successful growth track record for the past 20 years, and works hard to maintain that ability to provide tailored programs for clients.

In recognition of his successes, LaPenna has received the Director of the Year Award from the Professional Insurance Agents of New Jersey. He served as the organization’s first vice president in 2015-16 and as vice president of its committees for government affairs and political action before being elected president in 2016.



CHUCK JENNINGS

Acentria Insurance
Brandon, FL

Few people can say they’ve been in the industry for as long as Chuck Jennings, who now has more than five decades’ worth of insurance expertise. As VP at Acentria, Jennings specializes in law firms and agriculture, and continues to uphold the importance of building meaningful, lifelong relationships with his clients.

Born in Arkansas and raised in Mississippi, Jennings completed a degree in business administration and joined the US Navy shortly after graduation. He entered the insurance industry as a claims adjuster and eventually moved into sales, where he thrived by sticking to the basic principles of integrity, honesty and hard work, all of which have contributed to his success.



SAM SACKLER

Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance
Hattiesburg, MS

A firm believer in the significance of continuing education in the insurance industry, Sam Sackler holds both CRM and CIC designations. A commercial insurance consultant for Fisher Brown Bottrell Insurance, Sackler has more than 20 years of experience providing coverage for companies of all sizes in the construction, healthcare, manufacturing, real estate and hospitality industries.

Involved in many community and professional groups, Sackler has served on the boards and committees of various organizations, including the Boy Scouts of America and the Hattiesburg Historic Downtown Association, for which he served as president. Sackler has also been asked to teach the Mississippi Development Authority’s annual Model Contractor Development Program to educate emerging contractors in South Mississippi on topics involving bonds and insurance.



KEVIN MASON

Acentria Insurance
Destin, FL

As co-founder and head of Acentria Insurance, Kevin Mason's top priority is developing solutions that will strengthen the company's position in the market. This year, Acentria took two more companies into its fold as part of its long-term goal to become the leading independent insurance agency in Florida.

Mason has been in the industry for nearly a quarter of a century, specializing in multifamily protection and coverage for national condominium associations. Previously, he was branch manager for Insurance of America, where he progressed from being Rookie of the Year to Agent of the Year in three years' time. He eventually became managing partner of its North Florida operations before venturing out on his own. Mason gives back to his community by serving on the board of the Destin Charity Wine Auction Foundation.



CURTIS W. PAGE

Higginbotham
Austin, TX

An Austin native, Curtis Page oversees the customer service, sales operations and growth initiatives of Higginbotham's Austin office as managing director. Page has more than 34 years of experience in property & casualty, professional liability, cyber liability, directors & officers and employment practices coverage lines, as well as expertise in healthcare and the nonprofit and social services sector.

Outside of Higginbotham, Page has served many local civic organizations in various capacities, including a stint as president of the Young Men's Business League, sponsor of the Austin Sunshine Camps and chairman of the Capital Area Alzheimer's Association.

LEROY CHRISTIANSEN

Gulfshore Insurance
Naples, FL

A former engineer captain in the US Army, where he managed the risk mitigation and safety programs for more than 600 soldiers, Leroy Christiansen switched gears when he joined the insurance industry in 2013.

As a commercial lines client advisor

with Gulfshore Insurance, Christiansen services a broad range of business clients in the Southwest Florida area, delivering commercial property & casualty solutions as well as strategic risk management. Christiansen has particular expertise in government contracting and general construction, and he remains active in those industries as member of the Collier Building Industry Association.



Saving the Chemical Industry Money on their Insurance Premiums

Consumer Specialties Insurance, RRG (CSI) is the chemical industry's leading and most reliable source of liability insurance coverage. CSI also is the exclusive partner of the Consumer Specialty Products Association (CSPA), the premier trade association representing the broad interests of companies engaged in the manufacturing, formulation, and distribution of specialty chemical products.

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CSI is the chemical industry's leading risk retention group, providing chemical manufacturers and distributors with a financially stable source of liability insurance for over 25 years. We are the exclusive partner of The Consumer Specialty Products Association (CSPA - www.cspa.org), the industry's leader for education and legislative advocacy. With membership in the CSPA, your clients can participate in CSPA's Product Care stewardship and best practices program. CSI Policyholders that participate receive additional premium discounts. CSI is endorsed by CSPA and administered by Ames & Gough.



Contact Ames & Gough at 703-827-2277 or email us at csipius@amesgough.com for more information.

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COVER STORY: TOP PRODUCERS

ZACHARY FANBERG

Eagan Insurance Agency
New Orleans, LA

Zachary Fanberg specializes in commercial and personal P&C insurance, and has an extensive background in real estate, particularly property sales and accounting management for large commercial apartment complexes. He is one of Eagan Insurance's condo insurance experts, having written coverage for a large percentage of condominiums and condo conversions in New Orleans.

Outside of insurance, Fanberg is an avid competitive sailor who has won the United States Men's Sailing Championship, the Mallory Cup, three times in recent years. Fanberg also participated in the annual St. Baldrick's



Day head-shaving event to raise money for childhood cancer research, and has given his time and talent to the American Cancer Society event Bras for a Cause, sponsored by the Women's Council of Realtors.



ALLEN CHAPMAN

HUB International
Mobile, AL

As an executive vice president at HUB International, Allen Chapman works closely with business owners

to provide expertise and assistance in implementing an insurance program that is tailored to their specific needs. With 14 years of experience in the industry, Chapman strives to maintain strong working relationships with his clients by providing reliable risk management and insurance solutions.

Today, he focuses his business on large coastal property risk, public entities, healthcare, manufacturing and aviation – a growing sector that has had a major impact on his success.



TYLER LAMANTIA

Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.
Rolling Meadows, IL

A specialist in public entity risk pooling, Tyler LaMantia is an executive sales leader within Arthur J. Gallagher's public entity and scholastic team, and also serves as director of pool administration

for Risk Pool Administrators. He currently leads a team of seven pool administrators/producers.

LaMantia is a member of AJG's divisional leadership team and the intern program leadership team. A seven-time member of the company's elite Presidents' Club, LaMantia recently captured the 2016 John P. Gallagher Award for the producer of the year. In addition, he recently graduated from Harvard University's Breakthrough Leadership Program.



DEVIN PIPKIN

TrueNorth Companies
Cedar Rapids, IA

As a construction risk specialist and trusted advisor, Devin Pipkin's work covers multiple areas,

ranging from contracts and certificates of insurance to safety/loss control and even human resources and succession planning. Pipkin focuses on helping companies "put controls in place to create scenarios where they are less likely to have to use the insurance they carry."

In addition to a CIC designation, Pipkin also has an OSHA 10-hour certification and multiple construction-specific continuing education hours. He is a member of the Master Builders of Iowa, where he sits on the Associate Council. He is also part of the Association of General Contractors, which helps him stay attuned to the many issues that contractors face in their businesses today.



SHAWN BUDNEY

Acentria Insurance
Jacksonville, FL

Shawn Budney believes the true 'art of

the deal' is in relationship-building, which is also the key to success in this industry. Specializing in multifamily, commercial real estate and high-hazard risk management, Budney is an expert on carrier negotiations, specifically on matters such as thresholds and attachment points to layer programs, assessment of proper insurable valuations, and ultimately the best pricing for proper coverage of his clients' risks.

Budney immediately hit the ground running after entering the industry; he received the Top Gun Award multiple times from his previous employer, and he was recently awarded Acentria's Running of the Bull Award for his outstanding performance.