

West Bend Mutual Insurance Company Earns Deep Customer Connections' Top Ten Ranking

ACTON, Mass. – October 18, 2011 – More than 8,000 agents assessed the performance of over 200 property and casualty carriers in Deep Customer Connections, Inc.'s 9th year of surveying agents.

In the survey, agents rated how easy it is to place business with carriers based on 11 factors. Deep Customer Connections is proud to recognize West Bend for their outstanding performance.

In addition to achieving overall Top Ten status, West Bend was ranked in the top ten in these nine individual factors:

- Understands and acts on the needs of agency personnel
- Enables the agent to quote and issue a policy without rework
- Provides timely, accurate policy services
- Provides effective, user-friendly technology
- Handles claims promptly
- Handles claims fairly
- Provides marketing support
- Provides insurance expertise
- Makes it easy for the agent to work with the policyholder

“We recognize that our independent agents make a choice every time they place business,” said Jim Schwalen, West Bend’s vice president-Personal Lines and Marketing. “Whenever we talk to an agency about how they choose their top carrier partners, we hear the common theme of ‘ease of doing business’. It certainly is a simple concept, but requires focus and attention on many details to achieve results. It’s not about one or two big things; rather it’s about doing hundreds of little things right every time.”

In the survey, agents rated how easy it is to place business with carriers based on 11 different factors. The factors were developed and validated with agents based on what is most important to them in making it easy to place business with carriers. The Deep Customer Connections Opportunity Index gauges a carrier’s performance against what independent agents rate as most important when choosing with which carrier they will write business.

About West Bend

West Bend Mutual Insurance Company provides property/casualty insurance products throughout the Midwest. The company employs more than 1,000 associates and is represented by approximately 1,250 independent insurance agencies throughout ten Midwestern states. West Bend has been rated A (Excellent) or better by A.M. Best since 1971.

About Deep Customer Connections, Inc.

Deep Customer Connections, Inc. specializes in research, analysis and consulting to help property and casualty carriers achieve profitable growth by making it easier for their agents to write more business with them. Deep Customer Connections’ Opportunity Index is an industry benchmark of carriers’ performance. Further details of the 2011 survey results are available from Deep Customer Connections at 978-263-6100. <http://www.deepcustomerconnections.com>.