

Enrollment in a COVID-19 world: *Success for today and tomorrow*

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Working in the insurance world,
we all know to **expect** the **unexpected...**



...but nobody
expected COVID-19
or the **effects** it would
have on the 2020 open
enrollment season.



In today's webinar we'll cover...

- **The current state** of the enrollment environment
- **Essentials for enrolling successfully** in today's environment
- **What we can learn today** to leverage for tomorrow



Let's look at the current environment

- **COVID-19 effect on 2020 open enrollment (and beyond)**
- Delays or re-scheduling
- More employers working from home...may be permanent
- Uncertainty of 2021 open enrollment

Key trend in the current environment: increased focus on digital communication

As of April 2020, **35%** of the insurance industry had accelerated their use of digital communication.

McKinsey Digital. The COVID-19 recovery will be digital: A plan for the first 90 days. May 2020.



Let's look at the current environment

What has the trend towards digital communication looked like?

- Increase in virtual group meetings
- Use of pre-recorded webinars
- More pre-enrollment communication



Virtual is good but...

You can go virtual, but you can't go impersonal.



of employees say they need someone to talk to for benefits information.

Trustmark Connell Group Research. 2015.



Why you need to keep it personal...

- Employees have fewer one-on-one opportunities to ask questions
- Employees are aware of their benefits now more than ever
- An overload of communication or the wrong communication can lead to confusion

Due to COVID-19,
75% of adults consider their employer's benefits to be more important than ever before.

Prudential Financial. Workers see more value in employee benefits as pandemic-era annual enrollment nears. August 2020.





How to maximize enrollment in today's environment

1

2

3

Master personal pre-enrollment communication

- **Early communication** with clear **calls to action**
- **Emotion over facts**
- **Need to work with partners** who can do this right
- Employees who received **3 or more types of communication** were more satisfied with their benefits.
- Email, microsites, PDFs, interactive tools, video, social media, Slideshare

The most commonly cited reasons for enrolling in benefits are emotional ones, with “**peace of mind**” being most important

Trustmark and Customer Benefits Analytics, “Who Buys Voluntary and Why: 2017 Enrollment Study.”



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Invest in *seamless, easy-to-use* enrollment technology

The challenges of a strictly-digital enrollment can't be compounded by technology.

The right systems...

- **Simplify** the enrollment process
- Help you **remain adaptable** and keep enrollment on track



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Invest in *seamless,* easy-to-use enrollment technology

Why is technology so important?

- **The opportunity to use as a value add** for clients looking for new ways to accomplishment enrollment objectives
- **Gives you a competitive edge**, seen as tech savvy and innovative

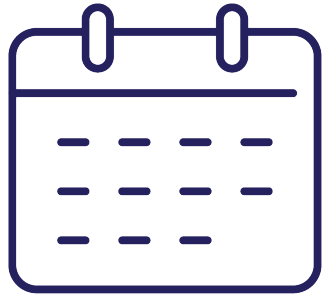


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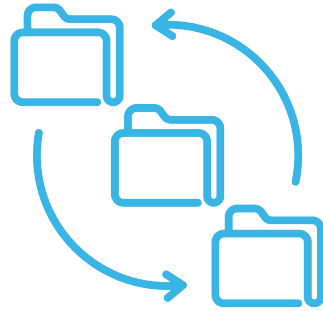
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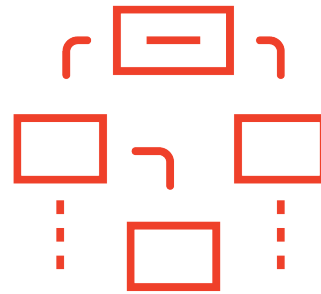
Seamless technology – what to look for?



Implementation
lead time



How does
data flow between
systems? (Will there
be manual file
transfers?)



Are they
using **API
technology?**



And, most importantly,
do they have the
personnel, staff and
**responsive service
to back you up?**

1

2

3

| Our solution

Simplink

1

2

3

Need to *increase resources* for answering employee questions

Virtual enrollments



Call centers



The importance of enrollment firms





“The most important quality of any plan is the flexibility to change.”

- Judson L Moore

What does an effective long-term approach entail?

A multi-year plan for...

Benefits



Employee communication



Employer initiatives



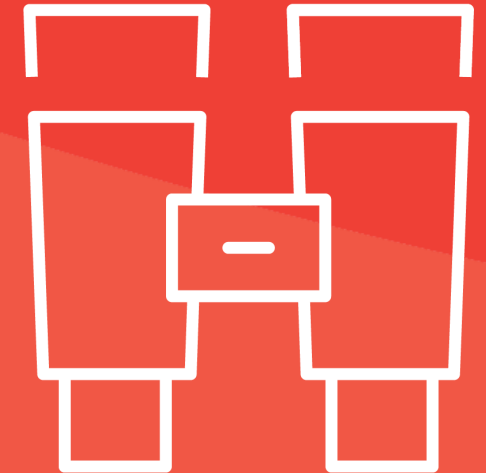
Why a long-term strategy is necessary for...

Brokers:

- Establishing long-term relationships with clients
- Taking a more consultative role
- Driving year-over-year benefits success
- How can we connect with employers who are sticking with their current benefit plans and carriers?

37% of employers will not change their current benefits strategy for 2021. **48%** are unsure and still monitoring the situation.

Mercer, Global Survey #5, June 2020.



Why we need to start planning long-term today...

Employers:

- **Meeting long-term goals** for the organization
- Employees retention and satisfaction
- **Successfully implementing** programs and initiatives
- How many under-utilized programs do you see?



Why we need to start planning long-term today...

Employees:

- Benefit plans that **meet their individual and family needs**
- Time to plan clear benefits **communication and education**
- **Simpler enrollment** process



Why you need to keep it personal...

- Changes in medical plans are very possible and can happen any time
- We are unsure of next year's enrollment situation
- It's not enough to put a temporary Band-Aid on your benefits plan

Employers' cost for health benefits will increase by 4.4% in 2021, with 22% planning to add or include voluntary benefits.

Healthcare Finance. Oct 5 2020.





Start planning your
benefit strategy for next year

How to start planning for a successful enrollment today

- Evaluate measurable results
 - **2020 vs. 2021**
- Evaluate success of 2020 open enrollment based on your goals and objectives
 - **Plan for virtual meetings** starting 1/1/22 at your early 2021 planning meetings
- Don't wait to see if things return to "normal"



How to start planning for a successful enrollment today

- Outline next year's enrollment and communication strategy
 - What does the **employer want to accomplish?**
 - How will you **communication** support that?
 - Best practices
- Considering how enrollment elements can work best together
 - Enrollment **technology**
 - Enrollment **communication**
 - Employee **support**
 - Using an **enrollment firm**



Key takeaways:

- **As we go virtual**, we can't afford to lose a personal touch for employees
- Implementing the right resources can help **keep the personal touch** you need in today's environment
- **Taking a big picture approach** to benefits pays off for brokers, employers and employees
- **Learn from this year's enrollments** and start planning next year's enrollment **TODAY!**

Thank you!

Contact us directly with questions:



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