



## >> Case Study: Insurance company Brand Development results in nearly 95% of employees and agents taking desired action within three days.

### Background

Pekin Insurance serves a core customer base in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin – and recently expanded west to include Arizona. They have more than 700 employees, and 7,500 independent insurance agents selling the company's products through more than 1,200 independent insurance agencies.

### Challenge

There was a need to rejuvenate the 'tired' Pekin Insurance brand and give the company a new voice to differentiate itself in the marketplace. While Pekin had maintained sales successes, the competitive marketplace had expanded to include a much wider scope of key players, ranging from the likes of Progressive and Geico to Allstate and State Farm. This had diminished the value of the independent insurance agent and presented increasing challenges to Pekin's perception in the marketplace.

### Solution

Hult led Pekin Insurance through a comprehensive Brand Development process beginning in the Spring of 2009. It began with in-depth qualitative research with representatives of the general employee base, Senior, Middle and Regional Sales Management employees, and independent insurance agents throughout the company's core five-state region. The overwhelming theme voiced by participants throughout this process was that Pekin Insurance, time and again, goes beyond the expected for its agents and insured.

This research set the stage for Pekin Insurance's *Beyond the expected*<sup>®</sup> positioning. We launched the company's rebranding in March 2010 with an integrated marketing strategy, including trade and consumer components, a complete Brand Management System, employee brand training, a microsite ([www.beyondtheexpected.com](http://www.beyondtheexpected.com)), and a new Pekin Insurance website. A dimensional direct mail to the agent force introduced the brand, with the microsite as a primary feature.

The microsite featured dramatic video testimonials of Pekin policyholders who had experienced a catastrophic event, as well as the Pekin agents and company employees who responded.

A primary driver to the microsite was the agent co-op TV program, which included a series of 30-second TV spots featuring the policyholders shown online. Hult has been responsible for executing Pekin's co-op program for more than 50 years.

### Results

Web analytics showed that, within three days, **95%** of employees and agents had viewed the microsite. Truly, the *Beyond the expected*<sup>®</sup> positioning has been embraced throughout the company and the agent force. Since then, this theme has become the core culture on which the company operates day in and day out. Each and every piece of communication produced by the company – from how the phone is answered to newsletters to the company's online presence – all reflect the *Beyond the expected*<sup>®</sup> positioning.

>> Within three days, **95%** of employees and agents had viewed the microsite.

>> "The response to the rebranding has been **99.9% positive** – and the buzz with the employees made it worth it all. We have hit it out of the park, and we don't want the buzz to fizzle!"

– Gordon Walker, Pekin Insurance CEO

>> "Beyond the expected has become part of our internal brand vernacular. It's a focal point for us."

– Joel Jackson, Vice President of Marketing, Pekin Insurance

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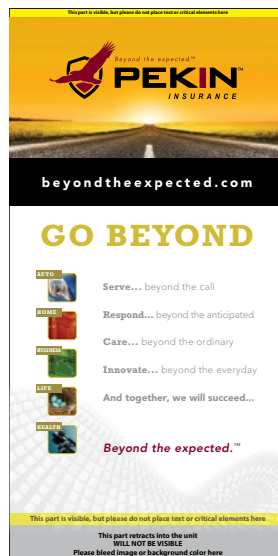
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