



October 26, 2010

West Bend Shares #1 Rank in National Survey

WEST BEND, WI – West Bend Mutual Insurance Company shares the top spot with two other carriers in a survey that assesses the company's ease of doing business.

Nationwide 7,800 independent agents and brokers ranked the performance of more than 200 property and casualty carriers in Deep Customer Connections, Inc.'s eighth annual survey. In the survey, agents rated how easy it is to place business with carriers based on 11 factors.

"West Bend has scored at the top every year," said Nort Salz, president of Deep Customer Connections. "They consistently perform at the highest level, and this year West Bend is the only carrier to earn top ten status in all 11 factors. Making it easier for their agents to do business with them clearly is ingrained in the West Bend culture."

Tied with West Bend for the number-one ranking are MEMIC, a workers' compensation carrier headquartered in Maine, and ACUITY, a multi-lines carriers headquartered in Sheboygan.

"At West Bend we remain committed to being the company of choice for our independent agency partners," said Kevin Steiner, president and CEO. "A key element of that strategy is to continually search for ways to make it easy for our agents to do business with us. Our number-one ranking affirms that our 1,000-plus associates place a very high priority on doing that every day."

"Making it easier to write business is a simple idea, but complex and difficult to implement," added Salz. "Independent agents rate carriers on both transactional and relationship performance across underwriting, claims, policy services and other areas. For West Bend to have achieved this top level of performance over so many factors and against such a large field of competitors is a great accomplishment."

"45,000 independent agents have participated in our research over the past eight years," noted John Uzzi, senior associate at Deep Customer Connections. "This response speaks volumes about how important it is for carriers to make it easier for their agents to write business."