

# Three Strategies to Help Insurers Improve Distribution Management

How Modernizing Agent Management Benefits Your Workforce – and Your Bottom Line



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**Insurance carriers and financial services providers that rely on third parties to sell their products need to build strong, well-trained, customer-focused agent teams. But agents or brokers often split their time and attention – serving multiple lines of business and working for different insurance companies. What steps can insurers like you take to ensure that these agents meet their sales goals and provide **high-quality customer service**?**

## Key Challenges of Distribution Management

### HANDLING COMPLEX SYSTEMS AND MEETING AGENT NEEDS

The best way to maximize your company's sales performance is to create a mutually beneficial experience: it should support your business goals while meeting agents' needs for timely and accurate compensation, clear communication about products and performance, and the tools to sell effectively.

But it's not always easy to create this experience, due to these key challenges:

- **Lack of visibility** into the complete agent lifecycle, making it difficult to manage issues such as onboarding, compensation eligibility, and compliance
- **Multiple agent management systems and information silos**, which increase the complexity of managing processes and can compromise data consistency and accuracy

- **Integration challenges** that limit your ability to provide excellent agent and customer experiences across multiple channels
- **Lack of agility** to handle multiple dynamic roles, products, and geographic hierarchies, which complicates issues in regard to crediting, chargebacks, policy tracking, and premium details
- **Manual processes** that alienate agents by causing compensation-calculation errors, plan discrepancies, and administrative inconsistencies

To address these challenges, focus on the key elements that enable agent success (see the [table](#) on the next page).

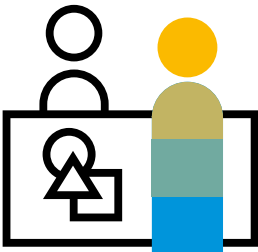
What's the best way to meet your strategic business goals? Drive **profitable sales behaviors** with sales performance management solutions in the SAP® SuccessFactors® portfolio.



Supporting Agents at Every Stage

Key Management Issue	What Agents Want
Recruitment and retention	Attractive compensation packages, training and development opportunities, and a supportive work environment
Compliance and regulations	Ongoing training and education tracking for compliance-related data supported by technology solutions that help carriers manage compliance risk
Customer experience	Excellent training, tools, and support – including access to customer data and analytics that support personalized service
Competitive pressures	Products, pricing, and support that help agents differentiate themselves
Technology adoption	Tools that help agents boost productivity and serve customers effectively, plus the training to adopt these tools
Diversity and inclusion	Inclusive recruitment and hiring practices that make agents feel valued and supported

To build a better agent experience, you need to streamline commissions and incentive compensation. **Sales performance management solutions** can help.





# Best Practices for Agent and Agency Lifecycle Management

Effective agent management helps minimize friction between agents and your company by providing clear paths for key processes. The following sections provide details of three best practices for managing your agent workforce.

## OPTIMIZE AGENT ONBOARDING

To ensure that new agents are properly trained, equipped, and integrated into your company, make the most of your onboarding processes with these steps:

- **Create a structured, comprehensive onboarding program** that includes a clear agenda, training modules, and objectives for each phase of the onboarding process
- **Assign a mentor or coach** to guide new agents and provide support throughout the onboarding process
- **Use technology** – such as online training modules, e-signature tools, and document management systems – to streamline onboarding
- **Train new agents** on your company's products, services, and sales techniques to help them sell successfully in today's competitive landscape
- **Establish clear expectations** for new agents on issues such as sales targets, compliance requirements, and performance metrics
- **Offer team-building activities or social events** that help agents develop a sense of belonging and feel more connected to your company
- **Monitor new agents' progress** and provide ongoing coaching and feedback to help them improve



## CREATE AN ENGAGING AGENT EXPERIENCE

A supportive, engaging environment helps agents succeed in their role, which drives business growth. To address agents' needs, challenges, and aspirations, make sure to:

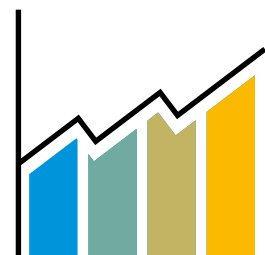
- **Streamline administrative tasks** using technology to reduce the time agents spend on manual activities
- **Provide comprehensive training** on products, services, and industry trends to help agents increase their sales performance and deliver better service to customers
- **Offer ongoing support** – such as access to mentors, sales coaches, and customer service representatives – to help agents improve their skills
- **Provide clear expectations** on sales targets, compliance requirements, and performance metrics to help agents understand your expectations and how they'll be evaluated
- **Offer competitive compensation packages** – including commission-based plans, bonuses, and other incentives – to attract and retain top-performing agents
- **Foster a sense of community**, which can help agents feel more connected to the company and motivated to succeed
- **Listen to feedback** and take action to address agents' concerns or suggestions

## DESIGN THE RIGHT AGENT COMPENSATION PLAN

To attract and retain top-performing agents, motivate agents to achieve your business objectives, and build a strong, sustainable agent force, it's important to develop a compensation plan that:

- **Aligns compensation** with your company's business objectives, such as increasing sales or improving customer retention
- **Is competitive** with industry standards
- **Provides incentives** to meet or exceed performance metrics, such as sales targets or customer satisfaction ratings
- **Includes clear guidelines and metrics** for earning commission or bonuses
- **Balances short-term goals** with your company's long-term customer retention and profitability strategies
- **Offers the flexibility** needed to adapt to changing market conditions or business objectives

Sales performance management solutions offer the tools agents need to succeed – improving performance and **driving business growth**.



# SAP Solutions for the Insurance Industry

## **POWERFUL, SCALABLE SALES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

Sales performance management solutions in the SAP SuccessFactors portfolio help facilitate agent management for the insurance industry. Powerful analytics, embedded intelligence, and built-in workflows help you accelerate business outcomes, minimize payment errors, and create an exceptional agent experience.

### **Agent Lifecycle Management**

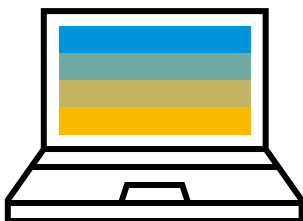
The SAP SuccessFactors Agent Lifecycle Management solution simplifies onboarding and compliance while empowering agents with a unified view of customers, policies, and performance. Agents can gain insights, save time, and improve their value to your business.

A central data hub provides a single source of truth for information about agents – including their licenses, appointments, training and certifications, background checks, contracts, and hierarchies – helping you proactively monitor compliance. SAP SuccessFactors Agent Lifecycle Management integrates with your ERP systems.

### **Incentives**

The SAP SuccessFactors Incentive Management solution offers incentive compensation management functionality that helps you motivate sales, influence selling behavior, and increase revenue. Offering a single trusted source of sales performance data for sellers and one-click traceability, SAP SuccessFactors Incentive Management helps you create, manage, optimize, and distribute effective incentive compensation programs at scale.

Artificial intelligence (AI) recommendations can optimize plan performance by showing sellers how to maximize their incentive compensation. The solution also includes a flexible rules engine that helps you create and manage dynamic incentive compensation plans.



## **MAXIMIZE AGENT PERFORMANCE WITH ADVANCED SOLUTIONS**

To learn more about sales performance management solutions in the SAP SuccessFactors portfolio, visit us [online](#).



