



Member Success

AGENCY GROWTH

Brian & Melissa Connell
Norwood Insurance



Norwood
Insurance Agency Inc.

CHALLENGE

An experienced entrepreneur assumed ownership of a family-owned independent agency that needed to improve efficiency and service in order to retain clients, grow the business, and expand to new markets.

MEMBERSHIP SOLUTIONS



Growth Advisory



Market Access



Market Incentives

RESULTS

30% ANNUAL AGENCY GROWTH

3x AVAILABLE CARRIER MARKETS



REBALANCED TOWARD CL

MEMBER SUCCESS STORY

In 2017, Principal Brian Connell and his wife Melissa took the helm of Norwood Insurance, a 150-year-old, family-owned agency with a long history in serving its community. In the years since, they doubled the agency's size, rebalanced its book toward more commercial lines accounts, and greatly expanded its carrier relationships.

As a result, Norwood Insurance is "growing at a 30% clip," says Brian, thanks in significant part to its membership with Renaissance.

The Connells assumed control of the agency with little knowledge of the insurance business after Melissa's brother Peter Bevelaqua, who had led it since 2000, passed away after a brief illness. (From the 1960s through 2000 the agency was helmed by Peter's father, R. Burke Bevelaqua, and his wife, Anne.)

"I feel as though our agency can compete with anybody. Having that level of credibility is massive."

Brian Connell
Norwood Insurance

“Renaissance’s experts understood exactly what we needed to do. Their people all had previous lives at carriers, as producers, and in service that provided us valuable knowledge.”

The principal says he was impressed by the Renaissance staff’s “professionalism, feeling like we were part of a team – having the ability to bounce things off people who knew the industry well.” Possessing the opportunity to network with fellow member agencies in New England was likewise invaluable. “Being able to lean on agency cohorts was huge,” he adds.

Norwood Insurance expanded its carrier partnerships from four to 12; taking advantage of Renaissance’s [market access](#) was key to helping the agency thrive. “We knew we needed more markets if we wanted to compete, and as a result, we now win the client’s business 75% of the time,” says Brian.

“We drastically changed the game on markets; we needed more arrows in our quiver,” he adds.

“You’ll lose clients if you can’t remarket them. Especially in today’s hard market, it’s important to speak with your clients and let them know that as an independent agent, you have multiple options to provide them.”

The agency has since focused on writing more technology firms and homeowners’ associations and built upon its reputation for handling lessor’s risks. Having access to more markets also helped Norwood expand into New Hampshire, Maine, and Florida, they are able to write accounts like vacation homes and coastal properties.



Growth Advisors work with member agencies to drive organic revenue growth, carrier optimization, and operational efficiency.

Renaissance’s Member Success team and [Growth Advisors](#) continue to provide assistance that Brian says has become essential to the agency. “We lean on their knowledge on how to round our book, understanding the market – knowing that the types of clients we’re pursuing line up with our carrier partners.”

With Renaissance’s help, Norwood Insurance also achieved the goal of going completely digital after more than a century and-a-half as a paper-based agency.

“We needed a core record covering all of our clients, and from an efficiency and productivity standpoint, it couldn’t be on paper,” says Brian. “We had to make sure there was a system of record that all our team could access, showing why our clients have reached out. Customers shouldn’t have to repeatedly explain themselves. Our IP is our customer service.”

Brian, who has long lived by the mantra that you have to take care of your clients or someone else will, adds that because Norwood Insurance is a Renaissance member agency, “I feel as though our agency can compete with anybody. Having that level of credibility is massive.”