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Cyber Insurance Not Needed for Underwood Typewriter

I came across this typewriter at the Ohio Village. There were millions of typewriters made by the Underwood Typewriter Company in the early 1930s.

If your business still operates with this type of equipment, there is no exposure to cyber crime. Nor is there a need for cyber insurance or procedures in the event of a privacy breach, system hack, or extortion demand.

If your company no longer depends on an Underwood typewriter, its time to think about training, protection, awareness, and coverage for cybercrime.



Service Line Coverage Saves the Day

Imagine having two sump pumps fail at the same time. It happened to one of our long term insureds. He discovered two clogged drain lines from the house to the street. Without working pumps, and both drains lines blocked, the water backed up into the basement.

The water damage claim amounted to \$15,000 and the service line claim was \$10,000. The customer called me to express his satisfaction. He was just hit with a large tax bill and was in no position to take on this expense.

Service line coverage was just introduced a few years ago. Customer response has been great and we've seen a few claims.

Reaching for Purse Distracts Driver

"You're going to kill me" are not the words I want to hear from my wife. However, I know that normally whatever happened isn't that bad. After such a buildup, I'm generally relieved to get the story.

She explained. "I was reaching for my purse and swerved just enough to hit the side mirror on a mailbox. I've done it the same way a million times. Don't know what happened this time".

I was not surprised. Keeping track of her large purse is a distraction while she's driving. During our annual winter drive to Florida the purse takes up way too much space and attention. Sometimes it tips over.



Even Guards Didn't Keep Gutters from Clogging

I returned home from the office recently and asked my wife if there were storms that morning. "Oh yes" she said "the water was streaming right over the gutters". Not good news. Standing in the yard I could see the gutters were full of "whirlybirds" from the Maple trees. These "helicopters" get stuck in the webbing of the gutter guards.

I was able to get a contractor out within a week to clean the gutters (that's not me in the photo). He identified that one of the gutters was sagging a bit in the middle. That meant it was not draining correctly to the downspout. He saw a few "valleys" that clog sooner than other spots. In all, an important maintenance practice and well worth the cost.



Contractor Takes a Break—Leaves Fire Behind



One of our customers called to report a fire in her apartment building. It turns out the property manager was soldering before leaving for a break. The heat generated by the soldering iron was enough to start a fire. It smoldered outside of the view of the contractor.

I had a plumbing contractor to my home a few years ago. He soldered a copper water line close to the wood beam in my basement. "Aren't you going to keep an eye on that spot" I said as he cleaned up his tools and started to leave. "It's fine" he said, "nothing to worry about". I conducted my own fire watch over the next few hours just to make sure nothing ignited.

Agency Acquires Girard Insurance Planners

After 40 years in the insurance business, Jess Girard was ready to fish, spend time with family, and retire from the daily work of an insurance agent. Jess likes antique cars and writes a number of car owners thru Hagerty, a specialist in classic car insurance. Our agency acquired his book of business on June 1, 2022.



Is My Role to be a Customer Advocate?

This past spring, one of my business customers was named as a defendant in a lawsuit. The legal papers were submitted to the insurance company for consideration. The claim professional assigned to the case determined there was no coverage under the business liability policy. He issued a letter with his explanation.

I wasn't comfortable with the explanation in the denial letter. I reached the claims manager who referred me to the home office specialist. I pointed out my reasons for differing with the coverage determination. "I know that you're being an advocate for your customer" said the home office professional, "but the policy language is clear". I told him I did not think the policy was clear. In our business, ambiguities are construed in favor of the insured, not the insurance company. Furthermore, I told him, I was an advocate for the right answer, regardless of who it favored.

Fortunately, the suit against my customer was dismissed.

From the Claim Department

- \$75,000** This claim arose from a dog bite. A person moving into a neighborhood went next door to alert the resident that a moving truck would be arriving. The new resident was not aware of a large dog in the neighboring yard. The new neighbor was told not to advance because of the dog. It was too late. The bite did minor damage but the claimant was knocked to the ground causing injuries to her hip. (Editors note: In Ohio dog owners are strictly liable for bite claims)
- \$1,696** Insured owns a trucking company. Tools / equipment was stolen from one of the trucks. One of the items was a remote controller to operate the plow. It was covered along with the CB radio. However, other tools were not covered. For example, a Craftsman 154 piece socket set. Total amount of the loss was \$4,788. (Editors note: The insured thought the truck policy also covered its contents. The truck policy only covers equipment specific to the maintenance / operation of the vehicle)
- \$172,000** Insured distributes equipment for use in cooking. An item used in a food truck caught fire. The truck was destroyed and there was damage to the facility where it was being stored. A suit was filed against the insured. There was a claim payment under our policy even though the insured had nothing to do with the production, use, instructions, or packaging of the cooker. The manufacturer contributed to the settlement. (Editors note: The distributor was part of the “stream of commerce” which generated exposure)
- \$131,516** A negligent driver hit our insured vehicle in the rear. At-fault driver only had property damage limits of \$25,000 (Ohio minimum). Damaged vehicle was a special edition car worth about \$75,000. Over time the cost new for the same car rose to more than \$130,000. This auto policy had a replacement cost feature so the insured got the larger amount. (Editors note: If your car is less than two years old, consider adding a replacement cost rider)
- \$14,520** This customer has a car policy for two vehicles. After a car / deer collision the insured called the office to report the claim. It turns out both cars on the policy were replaced about 14 months prior to the accident. In other words, the new cars were never added to the policy. After a week of analysis the insurance company accepted the claim and paid for the damage. The policy was corrected to show the new cars. (Editors note: Both of the new cars were leased. Some new car buyers assume the leasing company, bank, or dealership will call us—they don't)
- \$16,362** This claim payment is for a missing Rolex watch. Wife was admitted to the hospital and gave the watch to her husband for safekeeping. Upon discharge the watch could not be found. The watch was insured on a Personal Articles Policy. (Editors note: I had a similar situation with jewelry belonging to my wife. Early in our marriage she was hospitalized. She changed into the hospital gown and remembered bagging up her jewelry. She's sure she gave the bag to me for safekeeping. I had no recollection of the bag but maybe she was right. Her jewelry was never found)

Retirement Advice from Football Legend



James Laurinaitis was a standout football player for Ohio State and the St. Louis Rams. I heard him speak at a fundraising dinner for my high school, Bishop Watterson.

He didn't talk much about football. He talked about his faith and what it means to make a difference in the lives of others. He lasted only 4 months in retirement. Bored and looking for a new direction, he took a job in radio. Then he ran into his college coach Jim Tressel. "You have more to give than opinions on the radio" said coach. James took that to heart and now coaches linebackers at Notre Dame.

15 Years Into Generation #3

The first generation of people in our agency were Hugh McTeague, Bill McTeague, and Max Parrish (my father in law). Start date was sometime in the early 1960's. Like most start-ups it was tough going for a while.



Lynn/Kelly/Dan/Katie/Ralph

I took over in 1985 when Max Parrish became ill. Mark Larkin and Scott Egelhoff joined me as the second generation of the business. With a nucleus of accounts and solid insurance companies to represent, we had it better than the first generation.

Lynn and I have three children - Kelly, Dan, and Katie. They represent generation #3. Katie was the first of our children to join the agency. She celebrated her 15th anniversary in the company on 6/1/22.

When people hear that all three of our children are in the business, I often get a congratulatory reply. "How nice it is that you all work together. You're so lucky". The next comment is generally some version of "so, tell me, how do all of you get along?" The kids got along well growing up and its pretty much the same at work. I don't expect that to change when I'm no longer around.

Lessons in Finance From First Communion

Our grandson Jacob recently made his first communion. After the event there was a reception at his house where he opened his cards. Many had a check or cash. He was anxious to open a bank account with his new found wealth.

It reminded me of my own First Communion, spring of 1964. I took my haul to Buckeye Federal Savings and Loan. They had a branch on Kenny Rd near our home. I got a passbook with an entry showing my opening balance. How I looked forward to making deposits into that account. Every visit the teller would insert the book into the machine for processing. It updated my balance and even included a few cents of interest. After a lifetime of saving, its time for me to start spending. It's not as easy as it sounds.



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