

# BEST'S REVIEW<sup>®</sup>

# ISSUES & ANSWERS:

# New Trends in Specialty Coverage

An industry expert  
discusses new  
opportunities and  
emerging risks in the  
marketplace.



## Interviewed Inside:



**Russ Johnston**  
Nationwide

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# COMPETITIVE & STRATEGIC

**Kily Fleming**

*Cochrane & Company*

*Spokane, WA*

*Agent since 2005*

## Meet Business Partner ID #6583. Or as we call him, Kily.

“My passion for my free time is motorsports,” Kily says, and he knows the importance of having the skill and support of a dedicated racing crew. In teaming with Nationwide, Kily has total confidence in his partner. “I work very closely with my underwriter, building that trust.” Best of all, “He’s into cars too!”

Watch Kily take the track and learn how our

**COMPETITIVE & STRATEGIC**

E&S services turbocharge his underwriting at [nationwide.com/best](https://nationwide.com/best)

E&S | AM Best rating of A+ (Superior) | FSC XV | Fortune 100 company

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**Nationwide®**

# Positioning Ourselves for Success in Emerging Markets

By their very nature, emerging risks are a perfect fit for E&S and Specialty Lines. In a recent interview, Russ Johnston, President, E&S/Specialty, discusses current trends, staying prepared for new opportunities, cultivating expert talent, and why it's important to partner with a values-based leader like Nationwide in these specialty markets. Following are excerpts from this interview.

## What trends or emerging risks are specialty lines insurers seeing these days?

We're keeping a close eye on many noteworthy, emerging trends. We see that customers are increasingly considering how to protect their intellectual property. Cyber, as always, continues to be an area of focus, and the pandemic has only underscored how important cyber risks are. Climate change has also been in the spotlight. Climate-related disturbances have been increasing in frequency and severity over the last five to 10 years, and I don't believe this trend line is an aberration. We need to be prepared to address the ongoing risks of climate change moving forward.

## What's the key to staying competitive in the specialty marketplace?

The first thing you need to do is listen to your customer. At the end of the day, you could have the greatest thing since sliced bread, but if the customer doesn't want it, then you're not relevant.

It always starts with listening to what your customers are trying to solve for and then bringing solutions to bear. The second piece is innovation. If there's anything we've learned over the last 12 months, it's that companies that were on the innovation horizon were the ones that were successful. Finally, it's important to support the communities where we live and work. At Nationwide, we're passionate about helping others, and we have a long history of giving back through philanthropy, volunteerism and workplace giving.

## How are you attracting, developing and retaining underwriting talent?

For us, it really starts with the fact that we've got a great culture. Nationwide has been designated as a top company to work for in the United States by third parties based on surveys with our associates. Second, you need to be flexible in terms of how you bring talent into the organization. For us, I think that includes embracing a flexible working environment. This is something we learned well during the pandemic, and it will become an important part of our operating rhythm. Going forward, the vast



## Russ Johnston

President, E&S/Specialty  
Nationwide



"Our values are at the heart of everything we do, and that guides us in how we cultivate our relationships with both our associates and our business partners."

Go to the Issues & Answers section at [www.bestreview.com](http://www.bestreview.com) to watch an interview with Russ Johnston.

majority of our associates will either be in some remote or hybrid working environment.

Workers today also want to know how their employers are serving the community, and we've made an ongoing and sustained social commitment to a multitude of causes including a \$100 million contribution to the Nationwide Children's Hospital by the Nationwide Foundation.

## How important is it to be a values-based carrier in this highly competitive insurance marketplace?

Our values are at the heart of everything we do, and that guides us in how we cultivate our relationships with both our associates and our business partners. The great thing about being a mutual is our members—our key constituents. When we sit across the table from them, we view them as true partners. We recognize that our mutual success is dependent on each other. That really resonates with people.

Our mission has always been to protect people, businesses and futures with extraordinary care. This purpose shows up every day in everything that we do, and we're proud to share that with the members we serve.

