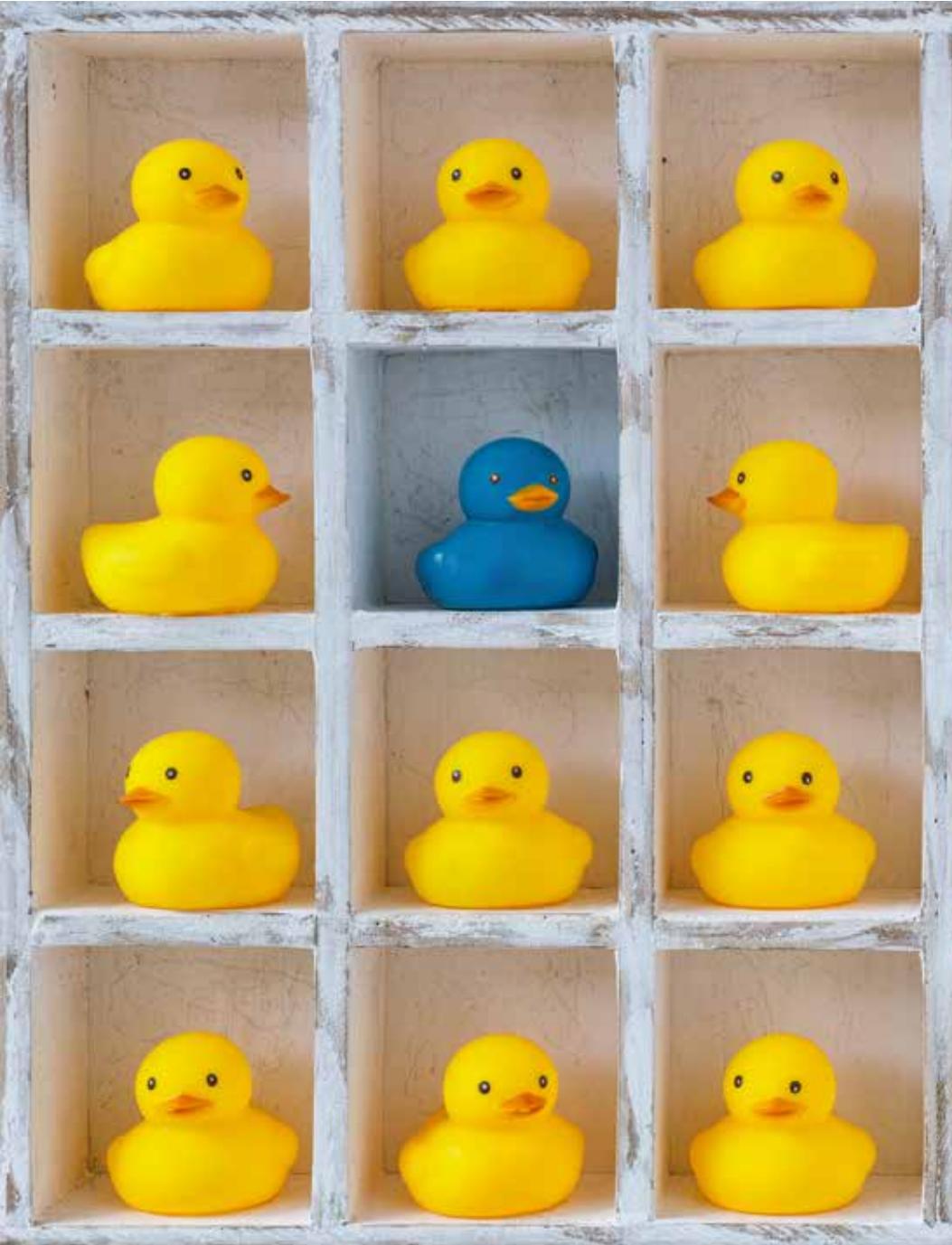


ADVISER CASE STUDY

# YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE MISSING





GI hasn't always been a top priority for mortgage advisers looking to support their clients. But with so many products available in today's market, consumers are in desperate need of a helping hand to find the right one.

**Too often, home insurance is seen as a necessary evil, rather than an easy way for people to protect their worldly goods. So, it's hardly surprising that consumers head to online comparison sites for the cheapest deals. Unfortunately, this high-risk strategy can also prove costly when it comes to making a claim.**

Richard Hall has been a mortgage adviser for over 20 years now and is worried by the amount of choice flooding the market and how overwhelming it can be for clients. GI is a significant part of his Mortgage Hall business in Garforth, Leeds and he is convinced that his clients need his help now more than ever. "GI brings great commission opportunities for advisers", he observes, "but that's only part of it. What's more important is that it's in the best interest of consumers."

Richard is the first to admit that the mortgage is always the main priority for his clients, but doesn't accept it has to stop there. On the contrary, he believes it his duty to support them in any way he can. "There are so many people who go direct for GI products and don't know

what they're doing", he says. "They're choosing the cheapest policies, but it's not covering them for everything they need."

He is very aware that some advisers see GI as not worth their time and as a result that consumers don't see the worth in getting advice. Personally, he can't understand why anyone would consider free professional advice as surplus to requirements. "I actually use a broker myself for products I'm not familiar with", he admits, "Even my car insurance. I don't think it's worth taking any chances. We should be passing on this same message to consumers. I know there are a lot of options out there with comparison sites, but nobody ever gets good advice from a meerkat and that's where they fall down."

## PUSHING AGAINST AN OPEN DOOR

What's interesting, is that it isn't hard for mortgage advisers to pursue GI sales. Generally speaking, they have a ready-made client base and a captive audience once the mortgage sale has been completed. All it needs is a conversation.

"Once the mortgage has been agreed I speak to them about GI. I put a quote in the mortgage confirmation email and if I don't hear back, I follow it up with a phone call."

Many of Richard's clients are first-time buyers, which he believes is all the more reason to help out. "I speak to a lot of people who are only 18, 19 or 20 years old", he explains. "They need a lot of hand-holding through the process because it's not something they've ever done before. That's not a bad thing - to be honest, I don't think I knew much myself at that age - and in a lot of ways it makes the process easier, because they want help and advice."

It's the same when he's dealing with new build customers. Clients are aware that they may need to consider slightly different benefits and tend to welcome Richard's input. But as he is quick to point out, it's not a case of targeting specific clients - everyone is different and can always benefit from good advice.

"I guess there are different product benefits to think about with new builds", he reflects, "so people are more open to advice. But I use the same process for all my clients. Obviously, some people are more familiar with the process than others, so I don't have to go into quite as much detail. But when I explain that I can help with GI, most of my clients are very receptive to it."

## WORKING WITH PAYMENTSHIELD

Richard has worked with Paymentshield since he first started writing mortgage business back in 1995. His experience has always been good, but he has seen plenty of changes along the way,

which have helped to strengthen the relationship and develop his business.

Richard acknowledges, "There are probably advisers out there who don't use Paymentshield based on price, because they don't realise how much it's improved. But it's much more competitive now and I'd strongly recommend they give it another try. Plus, what they have to offer is excellent."

In Richard's experience, when a home insurance policy comes in at less than £30 a month, his clients are generally happy - especially if they know the benefits are strong. And although it depends on the individual case, he finds that Paymentshield usually comes through for his clients. "It's an extremely good policy for the majority of clients", he confirms. "The price and benefits are spot on, and I find that my retention rates are really good too, which makes a big difference. It means my renewal rates are building up month on month."

These details all give Richard confidence that he's working with the right provider and make his life much easier. "The fact that I'm picking up the level of business I am, shows how well they're doing" he remarks. "The service is very good too. I get regular visits from the business development manager and all the support I need from the advisers over the phone. To be honest, everything runs smoothly."

## SEEING THE BIGGER PICTURE

Richard has seen his GI business increase a lot over the years, to the point where it is now a substantial part of his income. But he is convinced there's still room for improvement - especially while there are clients out there who are taking chances on their own.

"I believe as an adviser, you should be protecting your clients for everything. That's why the mortgage, the GI and the protection all come as a package with me. I think it's really important to look at the bigger picture - not just from a business perspective, but because that's what's best for the client."

When asked why other advisers overlook GI, he doesn't believe the reasons they have hold up. Aside from the duty of care element, which is being ignored, he concludes that they mustn't realise the size of the opportunity. "I earn £12,000 in my annual GI renewals alone", he muses. "I think that's a significant sum for very little effort. I don't mind you quoting me on that figure, because I don't think some advisers realise what they're missing out on!"



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