

The company, which has one of the broadest product offerings in the country, employs almost 100 people in three Canadian locations. There are 3,500 brokers in its distribution network.

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## PREMIER GROUP OF COMPANIES

# Canada's largest independent mga celebrates its 25th year in business

**T**his year marks an impressive milestone for Premier: the company celebrates 25 years in business. Even more impressive, the company – the largest, truly independent mga in Canada – remains privately owned.

Over the last quarter century, Premier has evolved substantially. It started out in a small back-room office in London, Ont., its only product, yacht insurance. The business is now one of the largest full-service managing underwriting agencies in Canada, employing almost 100 staff in three Canadian locations.

The product offering now available is one of the broadest of any mga in the country, with various departments handling **professional liability, environmental lines, construction risks, specialty**

**casualty, general property, specialty personal lines and marine.** The company is not kidding when it says, “There’s more to Premier than Marine.”

Looking back on the company’s evolution, the executive team first and foremost prides itself on Premier’s continued independence. President & ceo Troy Moreira explains that **“being independent means Premier is not in competition with independent brokers.”**

Premier is a rare example of an mga operation not owned by an insurance brokerage that could conflict with the company’s broker partners.

“Most of Premier’s competitors can’t say the same, as the majority of the larger managing underwriting agencies are now owned by brokerages or large broker consolidation groups, which inevitably

are out competing with their wholesale customers.”

He adds, “When you give business to a wholesaler/mga owned by a retail brokerage, you’re actively making your competitors stronger. With Premier, this is a non-issue.”

Mo Kaur, senior vp, says, “Premier’s independence is an important advantage in developing solid long-term relationships with the firm’s 3,500-broker distribution network. It simply does not make good business sense to support an organization that’s in competition with you, yet it seems to happen. Premier’s independence and size are key advantages.”

As an independent, Premier has full flexibility in working with various security providers.

“Our underwriting partners include the top blue chip syndicates at Lloyd’s, Temple

(a Munich Re company) and Sovereign General,” says Moreira. “This means we’re able to pair the appetite of almost 25 different insurer groups with the needs of our broker force across Canada. In cases where the mga is owned by a carrier or single Lloyd’s syndicate, they can only offer the broker force that one risk appetite.”



**Moreira**

Green has a diverse underwriting background, handling commercial accounts of all sizes.

“A lot of firms characterize themselves as service-focused, but very few truly follow through on that commitment to the exceptional level that Premier does,” she says. “Premier has a real live receptionist – a rarity these days – and our team doesn’t have voicemail boxes. We understand the value of a broker being able to speak instantly and directly to a front line underwriter.”

### NOT A WHOLESALER

Premier’s growth and development have centred around the company’s ability to find a need in the marketplace and produce a solution. This mindset has led to the development of a variety of very successful niche products. Kaur says, “When brokers look to us for specialty solutions, we have the size, agility and clout to do the research, create a program – policy wording, rates, capacity and claims management – and get it to market in as fast as two to three months. We operate more like an insurer due to our extensive in-house authority for underwriting and claims. We are a true mga, not a wholesaler. For our brokers, the advantage is fast decisions from your front line underwriter.”



**Kaur**

### FORWARD THINKING

The Premier Commercial Lines department has launched two new facilities this

year, the first being the Manufacturing & Excess facility, specializing in health and beauty products. Health and beauty products manufacturing was a natural fit; the flourishing Spa Program is already a big hit with brokers. The General Property facility targets apartment and strata/condo risks. During a time when brokers are struggling to fill the line on their larger condo accounts, Premier has been able to offer capacity where the industry needs it most. The program has gained excellent traction with brokers.

With personal lines, the fastest grow-

## PREMIER NICHE PRODUCTS

### Professional Lines

- IT Media
- Architects & Engineers
- Miscellaneous Classes
- Medical Malpractice
- D&O

### Environmental Lines

- Site Specific
- Contractors Pollution Liability

### Construction Risks

- Builders Risk
- Wrap-Up Liability
- Contractors – all types

### Specialty Commercial Lines

- Health, Spa & Wellness
- Protection Services
- Manufacturers & Distributors
- Umbrella & Excess
- General Property – incl Stratas
- Special Events

### Marine

- Hull, Cargo, Liabilities
- All types of recreational watercraft

### Personal Lines

- High-Value Homes
- Personal Umbrella
- Hard to Place Risks
- Mobile Homes, Trailers
- Motorcycles

ing new product is Personal Umbrella Liability. Premier saw a gap in the market with the company’s realization that personal umbrella is not always something Canadians think about.

“In the U.S.,” says Moreira, “a personal umbrella quote is almost guaranteed when you walk into a broker’s office. Premier wants to be the market that helps clients realize the value of an umbrella here in Canada. Most important, our personal umbrella product is available stand-alone. It’s also user-friendly

for brokers, not requiring all the usual efforts of schedule underlying policy information.”



**Green**

The product also has an additional feature. The underlying limit requirement for a U.S. location can be reduced from \$1 million to \$500,000 upon request. As more Canadians

buy secondary homes in the U.S., this is a great benefit.

## BEST CLAIMS SERVICE

Premier employs claims professionals with experience from major carriers and experts with industry-specific knowledge. Danielle Tchir, head of claims, came to Premier with 20 years’ experience.

“I’m proud of our claims service,” says Tchir. “The Premier claims team handles multimillion dollar property losses as well as complex liability claims. Customers are consistently impressed with Premier’s efficient, knowledgeable and fair claims process.”

Several customers have spoken similarly on the company’s website. Roger Cervo, senior vp with Willis Canada, talked about a large loss that would have been a serious setback for one of his clients were it not for the response time of Premier.



**Tchir**

“One of my developer clients suffered an unfortunate multimillion dollar fire loss some years ago,” Cervo wrote. “Working closely with Premier and its expert adjusters, we hand-delivered a multimillion dollar claims advance in very short order. This allowed the developer to move quickly through rebuild and fast-track the project with minimal operational delays. Premier’s expertise, timely efforts in adjusting the claim and overall commitment to service were beyond what is typical in the industry, and it clearly set the bar in the sector. “Everyone involved in the process was thrilled at Premier’s response and results.”

Says Moreira, “Claims service is what our policyholders are buying, and that’s why we’ll continue to be a leader in our field. Cheers to the next 25 years!” IP