

'Outrageous' Service Leads to Outrageous Growth

The Hatcher Agency Proves Its Point With Unique Features

BY JEFF HANKINS
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Greg Hatcher transferred the energies of his highly successful sales stint with Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield to his own agency.

The 32-year-old executive's result is The Hatcher Agency, a Little Rock health insurance firm that prides itself on "outrageous service" and makes every effort to live up to the billing.

"When I go see a client, I don't sell an insurance company," Hatcher says. "I sell them on us. They're not used to people selling service."

He compares his operation — which handles individual and group life, health and disability insurance — to a travel agency because he can sell any of the insurance carriers. He says the difference is his firm's caliber of service.

For example, all clients with morning appointments receive doughnuts; afternoon appointments receive Brent and Sam's Cookies. All insurance paperwork is hand-delivered via in-house runners. Office hours are 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. without closing for lunch. The office has

more telephone lines than people so clients never hear a busy signal.

Hatcher, who follows the principles of motivators such as Tom Peters and Zig Ziglar, is adamant about training, so one-hour sessions follow daily staff meetings at 7 a.m.

"That's the single most important reason for our growth," Hatcher says. "We follow the thinking that if you train people better than everyone else's, you'll always win."

Hatcher spent seven years with BCBS and was named "Account Executive of the Year" as top salesman a record six times. He left in September 1990 to start the agency with one employee and now has 14,

comprising the largest agency of its kind in the state.

The agency is growing rapidly, with gross premiums collected totaling \$4 million in its first year and \$19 million just three years later.

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