



BENEFIT COMMERCE *group*

NEWS RELEASE

Scott Wood and Chris Hogan at Benefit Commerce Group Recognized by National Employee Benefits Magazine



Scott Wood



Chris Hogan

Scottsdale, AZ, January 5, 2012 – Two executives of Benefit Commerce Group, an innovative employee benefits firm, received national awards for promoting progressive and meaningful employee benefit solutions which improve health care delivery and reduce costs.

Scott Wood and Chris Hogan were nominated by their peers and have been selected as “superstars” of health care consumerism by The Institute for HealthCare Consumerism. They are featured in a special issue of *CDHC Solutions*, a national employee benefits magazine. This annual award program is in its sixth year.

Wood, Principal at Benefit Commerce, received one of only two national awards presented for “Most Innovative Broker”. The organization describes this as: “a broker who learned a client’s needs and brought the most effective solutions to the employer cost-effectively”. He was nominated by John Young, Senior Vice President, Consumerism at Cigna. Read the full page *CDHC Solutions* article about Wood: www.benefitcommerce.com/docs/Scott_Wood_Award_Article_Annual_2011_Issue.pdf

Hogan, President of Benefit Commerce, received his award as an “Industry Innovator”. This category is described as “a solution provider who was successful in introducing and implementing better innovations in health and benefit solutions for employers and their employees”. He was nominated by Rick DeGraw, Senior Vice President, Chief Administrative Officer of SCF Arizona. Read the *CDHC Solutions* article about Hogan:

www.benefitcommerce.com/docs/Chris_Hogan_Award_Article_Annual_2011_Issue.pdf

The special “Annual Superstars 2011” issue of *CDHC Solutions* highlights best practices and innovative solutions in health and benefit management. It will be distributed in print and be featured on the

website www.theihcc.com. This keepsake will be seen by more than 70,000 employers, brokers, consultants, TPAs and regional health plans. The edition also will be featured for a year on The Institute's website.

Scott Wood: Most Innovative Broker

In the nomination of Scott Wood, John Young explained that with every client, Wood and his Benefit Commerce Group team analyze needs, develop near term and long term strategies, and implement the plan for results. For clients added during the past year, Wood and his company have saved an average of \$1,700+ per employee per year, while maintaining the economic value of employee benefits.

One example of Wood's cost-effective solutions is an industrial machinery company based in Phoenix. This company had been maintaining seven health plans from four carriers, and the company was facing double-digit premium increases annually. In 2010, with Wood's insights, this company began to approach its health plan as it did every other budget item, with analysis and strategy. In the first plan year, health plan costs were reduced by 21 percent from the previous year without cutting benefits or shifting costs. For 2012, expected medical costs remain 8 percent below 2009 costs, employee contributions will not change and employee cost share for the plan is being reduced by 16 percent.

Although this is not a large company (approximately 500 covered members), Wood proved that consumer directed health plans are not just for big companies anymore. He designed for this company a best practices consumer directed plan for all its covered members.

Chris Hogan: Industry Innovator

Chris Hogan and Benefit Commerce are being honored for developing Trend Neutralizer™, an innovative and exclusive program to guarantee premium savings for employers implementing consumer directed plans and comprehensive wellness programs.

Through analysis of years of empirical data, millions of members and actuarial analysis, Hogan and his team developed the metrics needed to measure the value of the health improvement efforts and successfully worked with insurance carriers to get them to reflect this reduction in their pricing. In this way, the program provides a true guarantee, and not just an estimate. For the first time, employers and employees are being rewarded guaranteed renewal premium savings based on the level of employee engagement and participation.

Hogan's development of the Trend Neutralizer and his introduction to employers of this type of tracking is having a significant impact on the ability of even mid-sized companies to achieve real dollar benefits from consumer directed programs.

For an employer, Trend Neutralizer can mean a significant savings on premiums for next year and subsequent years, as long as it maintains employee participation in its health improvement programs. Employers who have adopted Trend Neutralizer are seeing the returns which previously went to their insurance carrier return to their bottom line and leveraging the improved health and improved cost into operating a more successful business.

ABOUT Benefit Commerce Group

Benefit Commerce Group, the creator of its exclusive **Trend Neutralizer™**, is an innovative and award-winning employee benefits firm that is changing the health care cost paradigm, one company at a time. We provide employers with sustainable strategies to lower health care costs first-year and long-term and enhance productivity. Benefit Commerce is a “game-changer” for companies striving to control one of their highest expense items: employee benefits costs. We are not your typical benefits firm, and we are not offering typical cost-shifting techniques. Our strategies yield real savings for both employer and employee and also integrate meaningful consumer-focused employee health and wellness programs. Our technology enhancements also set us apart, as we offer methods to streamline HR functions from enrollment through ongoing employee communication and administration.

Benefit Commerce executives won both “Most Innovative Broker” and “Industry Innovator” national awards from The Institute for HealthCare Consumerism in December 2011. For more information on Benefit Commerce Group, visit our website www.benefitcommerce.com.

For more information, contact:

Nancy Zalud

815-985-9536

Nancy@benefitcommerce.com