

# The Lost Art of Submission Narratives

By Ken Kukral

I remember a number of years ago when I went to a reception held on the aircraft carrier The USS Intrepid. Kind of a unique place for a cocktail party but I figured I would go check it out. Well the week I was in New York it was in the 80's then in the 40's a day later so it was tough to control the temperature so it was a bit stuffy on an aircraft carrier. I quickly thought, I will make a showing and then slip out. As I tried to sneak towards the door I overheard one of the tour guides telling the story or some of the battles the aircraft carrier was in. I was enthralled by the stories he was telling and how he brought them to life. Over 10 years later I can still remember the stories he told. So the value of telling a story in an interesting and "lifelike" format is that it will be memorable. I only wish all history teachers could realize this and incorporate it into their classrooms.

So why don't more producers look to tell their clients "story" so that it will bring the account to life and catch the interest of the underwriter? I have always heard in sales it is "all about the story". There is no way an application can tell the full story on an account so why not "tell the rest of the story" as the late Paul Harvey used to say.

You do want your submissions to stick out and catch the interest of the underwriter don't you? A well written narrative will answer many of the questions the underwriter may have and help speed your submission to the quoted stack. There is nothing worse than back and forth information gathering so slow down getting a quote. If you think about it, so few submissions have narratives anymore, that your submission will stick out favorably.

So what are the components of a good narrative?

1. One page in a story format
2. Details of your knowledge or relationship with the customer
3. Details of what makes this a good account
4. Loss control or risk management that the customer has implemented.
5. Explanations of any losses
6. Details of the business including growth plans
7. Why the carrier has a good opportunity to write this account
8. Any pricing or terms you need for this account to improve on their existing program.
9. Any gaps in the "story" for this account
10. Last but not least, when you need the quote by.

It is not a contest to see how little information you can to the carrier and still get a quote. This is a journey to properly write the account with the best value you can so that it can be a long-term client for your agency. **Develop your own narrative story format, be consistent and tell your clients “story” the best way you can. I would love to see any template format that your agency is presently using.**