

# CEO perspective: Glenn Lambert on turbocharging GT

Three years ago, our management team made a bold decision. We set out to be number one in our market segment. To achieve this goal, we knew that we had to implement significant changes to the way we ran our business.

Incremental improvements or cost reductions would not be enough to give us scalability, control and confidence to go aggressively for growth.

Our competitive strategy and focus has always been to provide a superior service to our customers and brokers. Old school thinking would imply that this also means higher operational cost. We needed to break this conundrum and do both: increase service and revenue lines while reducing costs. This meant that we had to change the old rule of “more policies = more people”.

To control our destiny, we needed the management controls and levers to maintain the equilibrium between **competitive premiums** (which drive our sales), **contained loss ratios** (which reduce our risk), and minimised **operational costs** (which drive our profit). I believe that this applies to all insurance agencies no matter which markets we operate in, and ultimately also determines the value of our businesses and our ability to compete.

Before we started, we set out three key priorities:

- achieve a holistic “single view of our business” with bulletproof numbers we could trust
- apply a “lean approach” to our processes and automate as much as we can while removing manual, non-value adding work
- have absolute predictability and control over our processes to minimise human error and gain certainty around our cost base

The only way we could achieve this was to re-model our entire operations with the goal of maximum automation and transparency of information. We knew that we had to deploy new business systems technology as the operational platform to take us into the future.

After a market evaluation we decided to partner with Gratex International – and today, the Gratex UPM platform controls and virtually run our business.

Our people are freed up to focus on initiatives that will make a difference to our brokers and customers and improve our competitive position. Personally, I find it very satisfying to see people love coming to work and grow in our business.

The numbers speak for themselves. While going through significant change, our business has grown by 13%. Our early estimates suggest that we have achieved efficiency gains in the region of 25–30%. We have virtually eliminated room for human error and now have total confidence in our numbers.

Most importantly, we have improved our service levels to brokers and customers. We can be

more creative and innovative because we now have the agility to take not only new complex products to market, but also to improve the value chain with our brokers and other partners like assessors and repairers.

On top of our operational systems, our CRM will provide us with additional value. The insight we will gain about interaction and relationship patterns in our wider ecosystem will be invaluable for responding quickly and decisively to changing market conditions.

Last year was a record year for GT Insurance. We are on our way to being Number One in our segment. I know that we could not have achieved this without taking bold steps and selecting the right partners.

Three years ago, we made a bold decision and chose a radical redesign of our business. The process was all but easy. Our results and the positive feedback from our partners prove that it was worth the effort. And we will do it again, if needed.

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