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THE INSURANCE GUIDE

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Look forward to 2017 by looking backward: Examining customer complaints

By **JOHN CULOTTA**

For small business owners all over the country, the end of the year means much more than time off for holiday celebrations. It is a time of reflection, analysis and planning, all aimed at driving better decisions for the year ahead. Pest management professionals can develop a plan for providing safer, more consistent service in 2017—while reducing insurance claims—by subjecting customer complaints to a detailed analysis.



Let's suppose a pest management firm analyzes its complaints over the past year and finds a common theme: customers' insect problems persist after a treatment is performed. From an insurance point of view, it is fair to presume that at some point one or more of these complaints will eventually become a claim to the insurance company.

Troubleshoot for your customers

A pest management company would be wise to examine these complaints and determine what can be done to eliminate or reduce them. In the above example, you can examine the details of the problem and the treatments tried, such as the type of pest, the kind and amount of pesticide used and the technician who applied it.



If you can find a common denominator with respect to the complaints, it becomes easy to correct the problem moving forward. For example, a majority of the complaints could center on one technician, although he is using the same chemicals as other techs. That might tell you that the technician may be the problem, not the chemical used in treatments.

What if the complaints are coming from a customer with

a roach infestation that has been treated by many different technicians? There may be a different lesson to be learned: the roach treatment chemical itself may need to be reviewed for potency and effectiveness.

Being proactive can prevent claims

These are just a few examples, but you can apply this process to many different types of customer complaints. The goal is to try to eliminate complaints before they become actual claims to your insurance company, which will only result in higher insurance costs. Be proactive, not reactive. Take customer complaints seriously, and you may remain one step ahead of claims.

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