

Does Northern Rock need more media exposure?

Nurseryplan income protection

Nick Elliman at large

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Northern Rock rock on

Northern Rock caused a stir in January by renewing their shirt sponsorship with Newcastle United

The chief executive of the taxpayer-owned bank justified the renewal of the Magpies' shirt sponsorship in the national press as being "a high return on investment and a good strategic fit", but another spokesman for the bank was quoted as being unable to provide any details of the actual financial rewards the sponsorship had delivered.

That's the problem with this type of sponsorship in financial services – converting the benefits into numbers the actuaries can understand, and actually deciding when to say enough is enough. The Cornhill Insurance cricket

sponsorship went on a lot longer than anyone expected because while raising brand awareness, it also fitted in nicely with regional hospitality for brokers and suppliers. Several years ago at one of the big conferences, a Cornhill marketing guru gave an insightful presentation on the success of Cornhill's foray into this area – where very few insurance companies had previously dared to tread. In Q&A session at the end, an unconvinced member of the audience stood up to ambush the presenter by demanding to know exactly how many extra policies Cornhill had sold as a result of this jolly.

But Cornhill's speaker was ready for this, and promptly turned the tables by pointing out that the aim was to raise brand awareness. It had nothing to do with selling. "This is a marketing exercise!" was his rebuff, left hanging in the air. To appreciate the shrewdness of this response, you have to remember that this was a time when an embarrassingly high number of senior insurance market figures still believed that 'marketing' and 'selling' were the same thing.

As for Northern Rock, surely recent months have already seen its brand awareness rocket sky high?

Another gap filled?

It's always good to report someone making the most of an apparent gap in the market. Pat Ball, a mother of two, grew up in Liverpool and has worked in insurance since 1970 starting with Sun Alliance as a trainee underwriter. She later moved to Legal & General as a commercial insurance surveyor, setting up her own broking operation in 1977 and later expanded into IFA territory.

It was this experience that led her last year to develop a new income protection cover called Nurseryplan for children's day care costs against parents' unexpected redundancy, ill health, or injury. Additional benefits include other expenses such as travel costs and baby items.

Online quotes appear on www.nurseryplan.co.uk

Who's that man?

I entirely agree with the wish expressed so succinctly by Alan Cleary in his 'awards' piece on page 20 in this issue. He believes Editors should have less (sorry Alan, I meant 'fewer' of course) of their own mug shots in their editorials. But needs must on some occasions. Especially in a magazine called *Insurance People!*

So, on the one hand we see two stalwarts at the annual IIB House of Commons Reception, David Worsfold of Incisive Media and John Greenway MP, IIB President, and Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Insurance & Financial Services.

On the other, we see Posh and Kylie at the NIG 'Cool Club' press outing taken a couple of

years ago. But who's the fella? No, no, not the King Lear look-alike. The good looking one in the background – in both photos?

Investigations pinpointed the mystery man to none other than Nick Elliman, head of business development at RBS Finsure.



Nick Elliman



David Worsfold & John Greenway



Is that Posh and Kylie?