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COME AND GET IT!—When most agents think of their trade association, they think first of paying dues. Then, it's likely they spend the rest of the year searching for reasons to justify having done so. We hope FAIA members don't have to search very far or very long; but, if you do, please call Fred Phelps (850-893-4155, ext. 342) so he can share with you all the money you could be saving and making with products and services from FAIA's subsidiary, FMS. Fred will also explain FAIA's utilization bonus. Similar to a manufacturer's rebate (but different), the more you save or make buying products and services from FMS, the more cash you get at the end of the year. This year FAIA will be sending over \$180,000 to almost 500 FAIA members. That's cash, not green stamps or CE vouchers or savings coupons on future purchases, but real, green, spend-it-on-anything-you-want...cash! Some agents actually got back an amount equal to their entire dues payment, with one receiving 25 percent more than that. And, it's all for the privilege of making and saving money from FMS products. Nineteen members will receive 75 percent of their dues back and sixteen got 50 percent back with amounts ranging from \$267.78 to \$1,071.12. Each year, more agencies receive more money. If you'd like to be one of them, merely begin saving and making money with FMS products. Find out more at www.fms.com or by calling Fred Phelps at ext. 342.

THE GRADY INTERVIEW—FAIA has received very positive feedback on the content of President & CEO Jeff Grady's video interview by the *Insurance Journal*, during the Private Sector Summit meeting. So much so, we just thought you might want to listen yourself. The *Insurance Journal* noted over 600 hits by interested viewers. The primary focus of the interview was about Florida's property market and the issues agents face; the discussion included topics such as Citizens Property Insurance Corporation, reinsurance, insurance rate increases, the role the state government has played, consumer education, and others. [Click here](#) to view the interview on FAIA's website.

FROM THE BELTWAY—The Senate Banking Committee met to mark up and vote on legislation to reauthorize the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program (TRIPRA) and to reform the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The former passed the committee 20 to 1, while the Flood Insurance Reform and Modernization Act (FIRM) of 2007 passed unanimously. Unfortunately, it did not contain a provision that wind coverage be provided by the National Flood Insurance Program. The FIRM Act, however, did reauthorize NFIP until 2013 (it is due to expire next September), eliminated the \$20 billion in NFIP debt, created a reserve of approximately \$10 billion for future claims, raised the premium increase annual cap from 10 percent to 15 percent, and removes subsidies for second homes. It did not include IIABA's additional coverage options for business interruption, additional living expenses, or basement coverage. Nor did it increase the coverage limits. A separate amendment that would have added windstorm coverage was withdrawn by Sens. Schumer (D-NY) and Martinez (R-FL). Chairman Dodd said that even though there is a major problem with windstorm availability, he feels he needs the recommendations of the Commission on Natural Disasters (passed by the committee two months ago, though not yet considered by the full Senate) before he endorses any specific solution. The flood/wind language passed the full House before being sent to the Senate.

- ◆ To read a recent editorial on the subject from the *Orlando Sentinel*, [click here](#).
- ◆ To read Jeff Grady's Op Ed letter regarding the editorial, [click here](#).

SURVEY SAYS!—Back in August, your Automation Task Force created and deployed a survey to all FAIA member agencies. Working from the instructions of FAIA’s Board of Directors to assist in propelling the national “Real Time” initiative, they needed to gather data to help with this endeavor. Also, since they were doing a survey, they thought it would be a good idea to learn more about the business tools or “technology” FAIA agencies use to conduct business on a daily basis.

What they found out was that most agencies are up-to-date with their software both on the operating system level as well as their management systems. Regarding management systems, the survey revealed that 38 percent used AMS products and 45 percent used Applied Systems products. Combined, these two companies account for 83 percent of the market.

Most agencies utilize or have the capability to download and use some form of “Real Time” processing. To see some other very interesting aspects of the survey, [click here](#) to see the survey results.

The survey identified several Florida domestic carriers that do not embrace either downloads or “Real Time” access to policy information through agency management systems. Rest assured...they are on it!

Also, many agencies thought their companies did not embrace these technologies, but, in fact, they do. You can visit the [carrier possibility](#) section on the ACT (Agents Council for Technology) website and see the possibilities your carriers can provide. If you do not see your carrier on the list and they do utilize these technologies, you can encourage them to add their capabilities to the list by contacting ACT.

NEWS BRIEFS

AXA Insurance Company—FSR of “A-” affirmed and ICR of “a-” assigned by A.M. Best.

National Financial Group—FSR of “A-” and ICR of “a-” affirmed by A.M. Best.

KEEP THESE DATES FREE!

FAIA’s Legislative Fly-In—March 26–27, 2008; The DoubleTree Hotel, Tallahassee.

FAIA’s 104th Anniversary Convention—June 12–14, 2008; Orlando World Center Marriott Resort, Orlando.

FAIA’s Planning Session—August 21–23, 2008; Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa, Destin.

NEW FAIA MEMBERS

NEW MEMBERS

Insurexchange, Inc. – Ft. Lauderdale
 Integrated Insurance Services, Inc. – Cape Coral
 Titan Insurance Group – Ft. Lauderdale

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Andrews, Crabtree, Knox & Andrews – Tallahassee
 Bill Lovell Insurance, Inc. – Ocala
 Gary Ahrens Insurance Agency, Inc. – Ocala
 Kim Jones Agency, Inc. – Titusville
 Post Insurance & Financial, Inc. – Port St. Lucie
 Professional Insurance Advisors, LLC – Vero Beach
 Purpose Employer Solutions – Venice
 Rick Callum Insurance, Inc. – Ocala
 TVG Insurance Services – Lakeland
 William J. Hoge, Jr., Inc. – Brandon

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NOTE: FAIA is not involved in the business of giving legal advice. Whenever questions arise, agents are urged to seek the counsel of a competent attorney licensed in Florida and familiar with the Florida Insurance Code.