



Message from the CEO

December 2022

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Partner | President & CEO

As we close out 2022, I would like to take the opportunity to personally thank you for your partnership and confidence in USI Consulting Group (USICG) during these times of financial uncertainty. I can assure you that USICG remains committed to supporting you in optimizing your retirement plan(s), driving financial wellness for your employees and influencing the long-term financial success of your organization. Below please find a summary of recent developments at USICG and our parent company, USI Insurance Services (USI).

USI CONSULTING GROUP



USICG's national presence continues to expand with new consultants in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon and Texas.



In October, USI and USI Consulting Group announced the acquisition of Tulsa, Oklahoma-based Beasley & Company. Founded in 1992, Beasley & Company is a regional benefit consulting firm specializing in retirement, executive compensation and health & welfare benefit plans.



USICG celebrated National Retirement Security Week, a dedicated effort to raise awareness about the importance of saving for retirement. The week encourages employees to reflect on their personal retirement goals and determine if they are on target to reach those goals. Learn more and access our resources [here](#).

Defined Benefit (DB) Pension Plan Consulting & Actuarial Services

While the rising rate environment of 2022 has created an incredibly volatile environment for the capital markets, it has also opened the best window of opportunity in several decades to review and adjust the fixed income investments of a pension plan's portfolio. Now is the time to take advantage of current market conditions, which are incredibly favorable for any de-risking activity related to the recent increase in rates. USICG's integrated team of experienced actuarial consultants and investment advisors work together to achieve plan objectives while optimizing funded status variability. Learn how you can take advantage of this opportunity and the ways we can help you mitigate risk [here](#).

DB Pension Plan Administration Services

Our Benefit Administration practice has added many new clients this year, mainly due to organizations transitioning from internal administration support and those who found USICG to be a better outsourcing partner. We help relieve the administrative burden of our clients' pension plans and serve over 500,000 plan participants through our proprietary technology, including a secure participant portal and call center. Our administration platform is flexible to offer either a co-sourced solution, where our pension administration technology is used by the clients' HR staff, or a fully outsourced solution where USICG associates support the defined

benefit plan administration. You can learn more about outsourcing and the confidence it provides in knowing your plan is being administered accurately, efficiently and cost-effectively [here](#).

Defined Contribution (DC) Consulting | 401(k), 403(b), 457, money purchase & profit-sharing plans

The Defined Contribution Consulting team continues to grow, and we have added talented staff with new colleagues in Iowa, Minnesota and North Carolina. Our team helps clients oversee their fiduciary duties and provides support for the administration of 401(k), 403(b) and other defined contribution plans.

One of the ways we have supported clients recently is by proactively identifying potential problems in their plans through an independent, comprehensive compliance review. These reviews ensure that retirement plan sponsors have proper processes and controls in place and may identify potential liabilities that exist with non-discrimination testing, the timing of employee contribution deposits, or related entities that may need to be considered as part of a controlled group or affiliated service group of companies, for example. Conducting a compliance review ensures that plan sponsors have sufficient documentation in place to fulfill their obligations as plan fiduciaries and allows them to correct any defects in a cost-effective manner. Learn more about how you can conduct an operational compliance review of your plan [here](#).

Direct Solutions® DC Bundled Services

Direct Solutions (DS), our bundled offering for total DC plan services through a single source, has delivered the following enhancements for 401(k), 403(b) and other DC clients:

- Delivered on the IRS provisions for retirement plan annual participant disclosures by developing customized participant disclosure materials and distributing as required by clients.
- Expanded investment offerings for the DS platform with new fund options are available for plan sponsors to add to their retirement programs, including the new AB Global, MassMutual Funds, MFS Funds, PIMCO Funds and Vanguard Index Funds.
- Expanded employee education services to include group presentations and individual counseling sessions to help plan participants with investing in a volatile market and financial wellness.
- Updated dual factor authentication and new user registration protocols for our participant website to enhance cyber-security for all client accounts.

If you have multiple service providers for your retirement plan, learn about the many reasons you should consider consolidating services with a single provider [here](#).

Emerging Plan DC Solutions

Our Emerging Plan Solutions (EPS) practice has continued to grow by welcoming new team members located in California, Colorado, Connecticut, Indiana, North Carolina, Oregon and Texas. We are also continuing to hire in other states such as Minnesota, Ohio and Washington as we look to expand our team even further with experienced retirement professionals.

A few initiatives that our team has been working on:

- Expanding our Relationship Management model to further provide proactive retirement consultation and assistance to our plan sponsors. This includes a timely quarterly touchpoint to help enhance participant education and discuss USICG's Fiduciary Training Program for plan sponsors.
- Our Third-Party Administration team has provided consultative support to plan sponsors with compliance correction issues requiring calculations such as missed deferrals, late contributions and lost earnings.
- Our Sales team has been actively working with many clients and prospects, consulting on the benefits of a standalone plan vs. being part of a PEO. They have also been actively engaged in conversations around the benefits of SIMPLE IRA terminations and how a 401(k) plan can provide enhanced retirement benefits for their employees as their companies have grown.

Investment Advisory Services |

USI Advisors (USIA)

- Due to business growth, the Investment Advisory team welcomed a new investment consultant in Ohio expanding its local presence in that regional market.

- Our team recently conducted two educational webinars ("Fireside chats") with industry experts concerning qualified default investment alternatives for DC plans and risk management strategies for DB pension plans. If you missed it, please reach out to your USICG representative for access to the recording.
- Additional initiatives we have been focused on:
 - Guiding plan sponsors through very volatile capital markets.
 - Continuing to conduct plan-specific educational sessions concerning risk management strategies for pension plans.
 - Expanding our due diligence with liability-driven investing (LDI) managers to provide expanded glide path and risk management services for pension plans.

USI INSURANCE SERVICES

USI continues to receive national industry recognition:



Throughout the summer and fall, USI received multiple **industry recognitions** as a leading insurance employer. These recognition programs are based on employee satisfaction metrics and anonymous survey feedback across benefits, compensation, culture, employee development and commitment to diversity and inclusion.

- In August, USI was recognized for the fifth consecutive year by Insurance Business America as a **"Top Insurance Employer."**
- In September, USI was named to Business Insurance's annual list of the **"Best Places to Work in Insurance"** for the third year in a row.
- In November, USI was recognized as one of Insurance Journal's **"2022 Best Agencies to Work For."**



In September, USI completed its ninth annual **USI Gives Back campaign**, an award-winning social responsibility program focused on supporting positive change in local communities across the country. Throughout the summer, USI team members took part in 307 volunteer events. The combined impact of these volunteer initiatives positively impacted more than 250,000 lives, totaling over 13,000 hours of volunteerism. Additionally, 79% of this year's events supported one or more diverse or underrepresented groups.

As we look forward to a new year, I want to thank you again for the trust and confidence you have placed with USICG. While you are in the capable hands of our team, I am always available if you would like to reach out to me directly with feedback, ideas or concerns. Wishing you a wonderful, healthy holiday season!

Best Regards,

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