

# The Professional

The Insurance Institute of Manchester - Part of the Chartered Insurance Institute

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# Reich Insurance Group

## Pride of Manchester

The two owners of the business are Simon Taylor, a former loss adjuster and board director of McLarens, and Danny Lopian, who has been involved in Reich since 1986. Both are in their mid-forties and have worked together closely as Partners since May 2002, when Simon joined after the Directors of McLarens sold their business to Capita Plc. The group comprises a core business of Reich Insurance Brokers; the Partnership with two limited companies. Simon and Danny take a hands-on approach to visiting major clients and all of the firm's decisions are made by the two Partners. The chemistry, teamwork and respect for each other are evident. This is a critical reason for the success of the business, the Partners feel.

The credit crunch has impacted upon Reich but not as severely as it has on many companies. Simon Taylor comments: *"Given our focus on Property Investors' business, I have to say the recession hasn't actually affected us as badly as other brokers. Some clients have seen it as a good buying opportunity and have added to their portfolios. This is still a buyer's market with some funds desperate to sell."*

Reich's clients can be fund managers, private individuals or huge, multinational property developers, upon which Danny Lopian comments: *"These are sophisticated clients and we can insure the land and the construction sites, although most of it is completed buildings and the tenants within them. We insure offices, industrial units, shopping centres to major distribution centres. We cover buildings from very big to very small."*

Commercial lines form 80% of Reich's business, the majority of which is commercial property. Around ten

*AFTER MORE THAN 65 YEARS OF BUSINESS, REICH TODAY PLACES IN EXCESS OF £55M IN GROSS WRITTEN PREMIUM AND HAS DOUBLED ITS SIZE IN THE LAST SEVEN YEARS. REICH, FROM A SINGLE MANCHESTER OFFICE, IS TOTALLY COMMITTED TO ITS NORTH WEST PRESENCE AND BASE. UNLIKE MANY OF ITS PEERS, THE OWNERS OF THE BUSINESS HAVE NO WISH TO CONSTANTLY ACQUIRE BROKERAGES, BUT WILL MAKE SPECIFIC ACQUISITIONS IF THE BUSINESS MEETS CERTAIN KEY CRITERIA. THE COMPANY HAVE A SIMPLE AIM, TO BE KNOWN AS THE BEST IN THE MARKET FOR SERVICE.*

years ago, Reich made a conscious decision to go "niche". Although the acquisition of WB Tidey & Co Ltd in 2008, brought a more general commercial insurance book to the table.

Despite reducing its agency base in the last few years by removing insurers who have not provided good service or have reduced their support to local brokers, Reich has plenty of insurer friends and is genuinely liked amongst the Insurer fraternity.

Simon Taylor remarked on how service-poor agencies continue to exist: *"I think that some brokers have supported insurers blindly and won't stop dealing with them. We are not bothered about cancelling agencies and starting new ones. We also are quite happy to criticise when service is poor and praise where it is superb."*

He also makes clear the kind of company that Reich will not deal with: *"unless the insurer can mirror our ethos for excellence in service, what's the point? We are very willing to start new agencies and build books with the new entrants, again if they meet our criteria. All insurers are clamouring for transferred business."*

The broker deals primarily with insurers' offices in Manchester and has five departments: commercial, property, claims, accounts and personal lines.

Reich has also been technologically innovative in creating a paperless office where everything is scanned. Simon comments that: *"We introduced a new scanning system in 2007 and removed over 100 filing cabinets from our offices. We also record all phone calls, which is great for training. If we have any queries or if our managers are conducting appraisals then it is extremely useful."*

Costs are also controlled tightly, as is evidenced by the low number of staff and high turnover of premium. The Partners are especially proud of this achievement, and make it their business to look after their staff. Hardly any move from Reich. Educating staff is also very high on the agenda.

Reich were delighted and extremely proud to have been awarded 'Chartered Insurance Broker status' by the Chartered Insurance Institute last year.

Their Compliance Manager, Andy Kay ACII said: *"Chartered Broker status is a well-established and trusted symbol of professionalism which has been used for some time by other practices such as solicitors and accountants. Following agreement from the Privy Council, insurance brokers who meet the required standards can apply for Chartered Broker status. To become accepted we have had to ensure that at least 90% of our customer-facing staff are members of the CII."*

Reich already have a number of employees who have attained professional qualifications via the CII following completion of their studies. Many of their younger staff are currently studying in order to improve the quality of their technical knowledge and the level of service and quality of advice they can offer to clients.

In summary, Reich believes that corporate Chartered Insurance Broker status distinguishes them from their competitors and raises their already high standards of professionalism even further still.

Earlier this year, Reich announced the formation of a new Healthcare division following the appointment of two new Directors, Karen Bailey and Wendy Newman, who joined them from Manson Warner Healthcare.



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Karen and Wendy have over 40 years' combined experience arranging private medical insurance and their knowledge of the market is unsurpassed. Their move to Reich Healthcare is part of a significant new expansion for the Reich Group.

Reich Insurance already have a long history of arranging healthcare insurance for their clients, but as Simon Taylor commented: *"We have seen the demand for this type of insurance cover grow significantly over the last few years, thus we recently decided to set up a separate division,*



*Simon Taylor and Danny Lopian*

*“Simon and Danny take a hands-on approach to visiting major clients and all of the firm’s decisions are made by the two Partners. The chemistry, teamwork and respect for each other are evident. This is a critical reason for the success of the business, the Partners feel. “*

*Reich Healthcare, to specialise in the provision of high quality private medical cover for both existing and new clients alike. This is an exciting opportunity for us and I firmly believe that once we apply the Reich commitment to service and product quality, we will soon become a leading provider of healthcare insurance in the UK.”*

This year Reich are sponsoring the Manchester Evening News Business of the Year Awards and are delighted to have the opportunity to judge the performance of the region’s brightest stars. Andrew Perry, Operations Manager explains: *“Reich are very proud of their Manchester heritage and, indeed, all our marketing materials state that we are Manchester based – Worldwide reach. Therefore, when Manchester Evening News approached us about their Business of the Year Awards, we jumped at the chance. It is a celebration of local companies who have weathered the storm of recession and come out the other side stronger and fitter. We are immensely proud to be associated with the Awards and with Manchester.”*

An appropriate sentiment indeed for a company established in Manchester in 1943. As supporters of the local Insurance Institute, and as Chartered Insurance Brokers, Reich set a fine example to local businesses of the true meaning of professional success!

