

icmif

International Cooperative and Mutual Insurance Federation

Marketing mutuality case studies



November 2020

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In this report we examine how a variety of ICMIF members, all of which are outperforming in their national markets, have identified what it is about their mutual/cooperative difference that is valuable to their members and then gone on to market this in different ways. We have examined past and current campaigns in a bid to give a wide range of ideas for other ICMIF members to draw from.

Thanks to the cooperation of our members, this report contains seven case studies, from seven different countries featuring multiple marketing assets which we hope will give you a variety of perspectives regarding ways to leverage your values-based proposition as part of your external promotions.

We also refer to each member's [ICMIF Global 500 Ranking](#). This is taken from a piece of research compiled in 2019 which presents a definitive analysis of the world's 500 largest mutual and cooperative insurers ranked by premium income, using 2017 year-end data.

Case studies



1. **The Co-operators (Canada)**
2. **NFU Mutual (UK)**
3. **Folksam (Sweden)**
4. **Income (Singapore)**
5. **Thrivent (USA)**
6. **Kokumin Kyosai Co-op (formally known as Zenrosai, Japan)**
7. **PPS (South Africa)**

Should you wish to learn more about any of the case studies in this report or discuss the thinking behind any of these examples, please contact ICMIF and we will connect you with the relevant people at the member organisation in question.

Many thanks,

Liz Green

Senior Vice-President, Membership Services, ICMIF



FOR PROFESSIONALS
SINCE 1941

1. The Co-operators (Canada)

Legal structure: **cooperative**
Affinity group: **agriculture**
ICMIF Global 500 rank: **78**
Business lines: **life and non-life**

Key products: **home, auto, life, investments, group auto & home, group benefits and business**

Distribution channels: **captive agencies, group sales, brokers, Managing General Agents (MGAs)**

Number of employees: **5,350**

Context



Established in 1945, The Co-operators was described by Albert Savage, one of the original founders of the company, as “an acorn that will grow into one of the greatest oak trees of the cooperative movement.” At the time, Savage was expressing the aspirations of both staff and clients.

The Co-operators was built by farmers in a bid to take care of themselves and their communities when traditional insurers did not meet their needs.

Since 2010, the organisation has consistently been ranked among Corporate Knights’ “Best 50 Corporate Citizens in Canada” – including #1 rankings in both 2011 and 2019.

Since 2018, The Co-operators has also been recognised as one of “Canada’s Greenest Employers” for effectively creating a culture of environmental awareness and action across the group of companies.

Vision

The Co-operators aspires to be valued by Canadians: To be a leader in the financial services industry; distinct in its cooperative character; and a catalyst for a sustainable society.

Mission

The Co-operators: financial security for Canadians and their communities.

Value proposition

As a Canadian-owned insurance company, we’ve been helping Canadians insure the important things for decades. You will find a home, life auto or travel insurance with us that is exactly what you need.

Slogans and taglines:

‘It’s our world’ ‘Together we can make it better’ ‘A better place for you’ ‘Built with a purpose’.

Promotion:



Over the years The Co-operators has used its position as a leading Canadian cooperative in its advertising and other internal and external communication.

By example, this International Year of Co-operatives social media video explains cooperation and how being a cooperative is core to The Co-operators. Its advertising and communications often touch on cooperative values and how they drive the way The Co-operators operates and treats its clients.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

Since 2013, The Co-operators has successfully evolved its values-based proposition and more recently has shifted focus from being 'Canada's most responsible business' to 'becoming a leader in responsible business, locally, nationally and globally'.

The Co-operators is fiercely proud of its cooperative structure and what being a cooperative means.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)



It continues to create many video assets to help mitigate risk and educate members and the general public alike. [Click here to visit the YouTube video library.](#)



It also creates video assets to explain its points of difference. [Click here to watch the video.](#)



2. NFU Mutual (UK)

Legal structure: **mutual**

Affinity group: **National Farmers' Union and other agricultural unions**

ICMIF Global 500 ranking: **99**

Business lines: **insurance and financial services**

Key products: **home insurance (including insurance for high-value homes and possessions), motor insurance, commercial insurance, farming insurance, and financial services covering investments, pensions and protection**

Distribution channels: **UK-wide agency network, Mutual Direct call centre**

Number of employees: **4,000**

Context



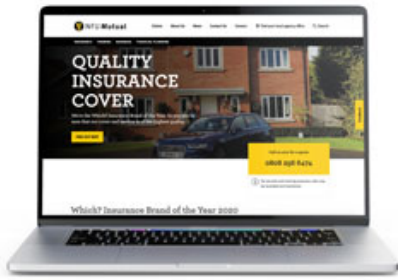
NFU Mutual was established in the UK in 1910 as a farming insurer. Over 100 years later, the organisation still maintains strong roots within the rural community and insures three quarters of the UK's farms. Today, NFU Mutual serves a much wider customer base, with over 900,000 insurance and financial services customers made up from farming and non-farming backgrounds.

NFU Mutual repeatedly wins accolades from important UK commentators, most recently winning the 2020 *Which?* Award for Insurance Brand of the Year. The awards reflect the trust that NFU Mutual has earned with customers and the communities it serves.

NFU Mutual isn't just recognised for its success in the insurance world. In Bain & Company's first UK Consumer Study, NFU Mutual was handed the highest net promoter score (NPS) for customer experience of any company in the UK.

A key differentiator of NFU Mutual is the organisation's preference for face-to-face, personal, local service – delivered through a network of over 300 regional agency offices.





NFU Mutual is very proud of its mutuality and is owned by and run for the benefit of its members. The website strongly promotes mutuality, and, of course, the word “mutual” is included in the company name.

[Click here to visit the website.](#)

To reward customer loyalty, a Mutual Bonus discount is offered to all customers who renew their general insurance policies. Customers can currently save up to 16.5% on their premiums based on the number of years they have insured with NFU Mutual.

This year, NFU Mutual launched a £32million Coronavirus Support Package for customers and communities affected by the global pandemic, which included increased charitable funding allocated to local organisations, including those affected by isolation.

Vision/mission

NFU Mutual works closely with its customers; acting responsibly, always doing the right thing and making a positive difference – for the good of its members and communities.

Value proposition

It's our mutuality which sets us apart. We're owned and run for you, over 900,000 members, and we work hard to protect your interests. From our 300 local offices offering personal service to our tailored quotes you can't get on price comparison sites, your needs are at the heart of everything we do.

Slogans and taglines:

‘Local personal service’

Challenging the ‘quick-click’ financial products culture, NFU Mutual focuses on delivering an attentive, local, personal service through its agency network. NFU Mutual promotes the real conversations its Agents and staff have with their customers, alongside its highly-rated home and motor insurance products within its recent TV campaigns. They feature real customers, Agents and staff from across the business within the adverts. This approach helps to drive not only brand awareness and consideration, but also a direct response and sales.

What sets NFU Mutual apart from other insurance companies in the UK is its local, personal service; it means that staff take the time to really get to know customers and when they need help, they know they can count on NFU Mutual to provide it – quickly, with no fuss.

NFU Mutual also has an active social media strategy that focuses on starting local conversations that Agents and their teams can then continue face to face.

3. Folksam (Sweden)

Legal structure: **mutual**
Affinity group: **labour and trade unions**
ICMIF Global 500 ranking: **58**
Business lines: **life, non-life and pensions**

Key products: **home, child, car, pet and boat insurance, health, life and accident insurance. Also many different forms of savings.**

Distribution channels: **own channels such as Folksam.se, advisers and bank**

Number of employees: **3,900**

Context



Folksam was founded in 1908 in response to poor availability of insurance for low income people in Sweden. Today, it is one of Sweden's largest investment managers and is the market leader in life insurance and third in the non-life insurance.

Folksam uses its financial strength to influence the organisations it invests in and through responsible investment, specifically in green bonds. Its ethical agenda also extends to road safety, lobbying for diversity and social fairness in many aspects of Swedish life.

Mission

Our job is to create security for our customers in all stages of life. With us, the customer can insure himself, his close relatives, his possessions and save for retirement.

Vision

Our customers should feel safe in a sustainable world.

Value proposition

We will be:

- Personal by showing thoughtfulness, dialogue and starting from the customer
- Engaged by being active and taking initiative for the customer as well as seeing opportunities and being solution-oriented
- Responsible by being reliable, knowledgeable and long-term.

Slogans and taglines:

'For everything that you love'

In 2012, Folksam's pet insurance customers were invited to help to design an advert that described the lengths their favourite insurer goes to when meeting the customers' needs.

The campaign that emerged went viral. A customer known as 'Eva' insures her cat with Folksam and suggested an idea that resulted in more than 3m YouTube hits. CNN and Time Magazine also ran the story which involved skydiving cats, forming the letters of her name in the sky, just to make Eva happy! After the success of this campaign, a follow-up advert came next featuring 'diving dogs'.

The advertisement used amplification and exaggeration to make the point that nothing is too much trouble for Folksam when it comes to making their customers happy.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)



[Click here to watch the video.](#)



Folksam has always prided itself in its heart-centred approach to serving its customers. Indeed, during Christmas the insurer lit up its iconic head office building with a heart to remind its customers where its priorities always lie.

Despite the pandemic, Folksam's 2020 advertising continues to be light-hearted and shot with a surreal charm. The latest 'For Everything You Love' campaign offers endless inventive ways of creating hugely memorable viewing.

Folksam's message is that they are committed to what their customers love. *What you love, you want to protect, save to and insure.*

[Click here to watch the video.](#)



4. Income (Singapore)

Legal structure: **cooperative**
Affinity group: **labour and trade unions**
ICMIF Global 500 ranking: **83**
Business lines: **life and non-life**
Key products: **commercial, auto, group, health and personal accident, life, savings and investments, travel**

Distribution channels: **tied and non-tied financial advisors, e-commerce portals and service branches**
Number of employees: **more than 2,700 employees and professional financial advisors**

Context



Established in 1970 to make essential insurance accessible to all Singaporeans, NTUC Income (commonly known as Income) is the only insurance cooperative in Singapore. Serving over two million customers in Singapore, Income is a leading composite insurer offering life, health and general insurance, and has also gained recognition for its digital and multi-channel propositions.

For 50 years, Income has been passionate about plugging the protection gaps of people from all walks of life, including the underserved and unserved communities in Singapore and it enjoys the strongest association to a socially-responsible company, amongst industry peers. Despite growing competition and an increasingly challenging business environment, Income remains committed to keeping insurance accessible, affordable and sustainable for customers at different life stages and across all segments of society.

Mission

We make a difference with insurance by providing insurance products and financial planning services to serve the protection, savings and investment needs of customers across all segments of society in Singapore and beyond.

Vision

We believe in striving for commercial leadership to better fulfil our social purpose. We strive to be a thriving social enterprise that offers financial security to the people in Singapore and beyond via our insurance and financial planning offerings while, at the same time, create and deliver long-term positive social impact in the community that we serve.

Value proposition

We make insurance simple for all by ensuring our policies are simple to read and easy to understand using plain English, and have products and services that cater to all segments of society. We believe in teaching people how to invest for the future, and we constantly innovate to launch products and initiatives that meet Singaporeans' future needs. We embed fair dealing in our way of working and we believe in being honest and transparent with our customers, recommending solutions tailored to each customer's financial needs and goals. We aim to serve our customers with professionalism and integrity.

Slogans and taglines:

Made Different

In 2007, NTUC Income embarked on an internal transformation programme known which saw a rebrand from NTUC Income to Income. This strategic overhaul identified the fact that the claims process was difficult at the time, and products were basic and limited. In 2011, Income launched the *Orange Force*, a 24/7 accident response team to assist motor policyholders who are often in a state of stress and anxiety at the scene of a motor accident. Today, Income remains the only insurer in Singapore to provide such a value-added service for its motor insurance policyholders.



By 2012, Income also completed an overhaul of its contracts to use only plain English to help customers understand their insurance policies easily so that they can make better-informed decisions. In 2015, Income underwent a brand refresh, centred on the tagline, “*Made Different*”, to strengthen Income’s commitment to make insurance different by providing an experience that sets them apart from other insurance companies and to deliver on their promise to customers.

These initiatives underscore Income’s pledge to make insurance *simple, honest and different* and to put customers first.

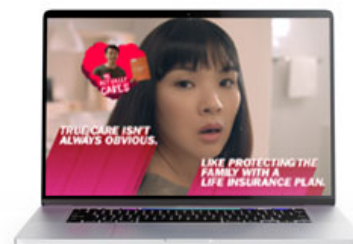
Income is committed to its social mission to provide essential insurance that is accessible and affordable.

Complementing this social mission is *OrangeAid*, Income’s flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative. It was established in October 2010 to help youths and children in disadvantaged circumstances.

In 2017, Income set up the Digital Transformation Office (DTO) to propel its digitalisation transformation journey, and to sharpen its offerings as an innovative digital insurer of tomorrow. Income has since brought to market a large number of unique and innovative propositions that speak to the needs of today’s consumers who increasingly demand flexibility, control and convenience as they make decisions to purchase insurance. In this regard, Income has reimagined the way people engage with, purchase and claim insurance with ground-breaking innovations such as *Droplet* (protection against surge pricing on ride-hailing platform when it rains), *Milesurance* (pay-as-you-use car insurance) and *SNACK*, the first stackable micro-policy insurance model that is linked to lifestyle activities. Income also offers the largest range of life insurance products online alongside its life insurance digital adviser, *AskSage*.



In connecting with customers, Income’s advertising is bold and thought-provoking. It often leverages current social issues affecting Singaporeans such as the protection gap in Singapore and dilemmas faced by the ‘Sandwich Generation’ to drive conversations and shed light on the importance of financial planning and insurance protection in Singapore, leveraging particularly social media. Examples of its recent awareness and public education campaigns include the “*True Care*” and “*Best Gift for Your Child*” campaigns.



[Click here to watch the video.](#)



[Click here to watch the video.](#)

5. Thrivent (USA)

Legal structure: **fraternal benefit society**

Affinity group: **Christians**

ICMIF Global 500 ranking: **48**

Business lines: **advice, insurance, investments, banking and generosity**

Key products: **fixed and variable life insurance, variable annuity, fixed indexed annuity, and fixed-rate annuity contracts, non-life products**

Distribution channels: **career financial professionals, hybrid Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) platform, licensed employee financial representatives**

Number of employees: **more than 3,500**

Number of financial professionals: **more than 2,500**

Context



Thrivent was established in 1902 to serve the life insurance needs of Lutheran Christians. As a fraternal benefit society, Thrivent is required to have a common bond. Until 2013, Thrivent's common bond was Lutheranism. In 2013, its membership voted to extend its common bond beyond Lutherans to include Christians. Thrivent serves clients in the USA.

Thrivent exists to help its clients achieve financial clarity, enabling lives of meaning and gratitude. It's a unique kind of membership organisation called a fraternal benefit society. By definition, a fraternal benefit society is a not-for-profit organisation that provides insurance to its members and – this is key – has to carry out social, intellectual, educational, charitable, benevolent, moral, fraternal, patriotic or religious purposes for the benefit of its members and the public. So, Thrivent does not simply sell insurance, and they don't simply provide social good, either. As a fraternal benefit society, they do both.

Over time, Thrivent has added other financial products and solutions to its product suite, although its core business remains life, health and annuity products. As a diversified financial services organisation, Thrivent offers advice, investments, insurance, banking and generosity to its more than 2.3 million clients.

Today, Thrivent is a Fortune 500 diversified financial services organisation and a highly respected life insurer.

Purpose

We believe humanity thrives when people make the most of all they've been given.

Promise

At Thrivent, we help people achieve financial clarity, enabling lives of meaning and gratitude.

Proposition

**As a purpose-driven, membership-owned organisation
Thrivent's proposition is:**

**With over 100 years of experience, we can help you
confidently plan your financial future.**

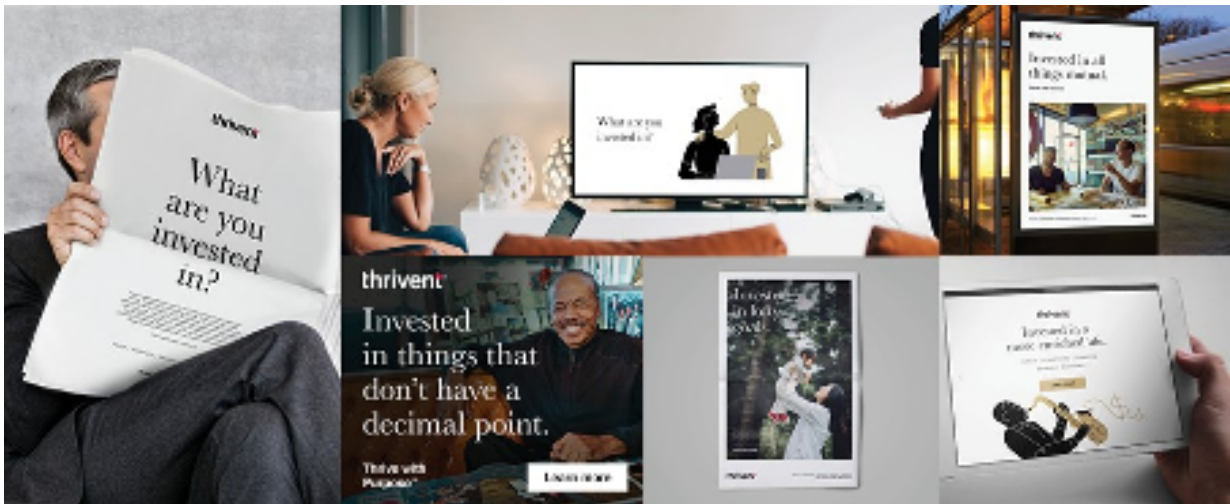
From providing for your family's future to giving back to your community, our expertise and thoughtful, purpose-based guidance can help you care for what (and who) matters most in your life.

**Other financial service companies answer to their
shareholders. We answer to you.**

With our unique structure and perspective, we're on your side – advocating for you and helping you navigate your financial future. You can feel confident that you have a partner who prioritizes your needs and values. Now and in the future.

**We build relationships based on transparency. And
relevance.**

Whether it's choosing insurance or the right investment, our transparent focus starts with you and your goals. We respect you and your time, sharing what you need to know, bringing you relevant and meaningful advice

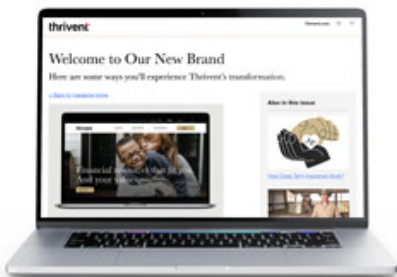


Slogans and taglines

Thrive with Purpose™

On 1 June 2020, Thrivent launched a new brand to reflect its purpose and promise to clients as part of its ongoing transformation as an organisation. The new brand is intended to fuel growth and relevance among a new generation of clients and show how Thrivent is a truly unique financial services organisation.

[Click here to visit the Welcome to Our New Brand website.](#)



Thrivent's new brand reflects its fundamental purpose as an organisation: "We believe humanity thrives when people make the most of all they've been given," says Thrivent.

Thrivent has also refined its promise to clients: "We're here to help you achieve financial clarity, enabling lives full of meaning and gratitude."

Thrivent's purpose and promise have guided its new brand expression. This includes a new logo design and redesigned website, engaging with clients in a holistic, appealing, and digital-first way, today – and in the future. Thrivent debuted a national advertising campaign during the summer of 2020 across television, print, digital and other channels to introduce the organisation to a new generation.

"Thrive with Purpose" is incorporated throughout the campaign. The idea highlights Thrivent's unique approach to helping clients build a financial strategy that allows them to use money as a tool to focus on their priorities and goals – to make purposeful financial decisions that reflect their values and pave the way for a future that is clearer and more meaningful.

"Brand, however, is much more than a logo. It will encompass everything you see, hear and feel when clients – and those new to Thrivent – interact with us. We are transforming the way we do business to ensure the experiences clients have with Thrivent are better than ever before – from a redesigned website, to new digital tools and streamlined processes that will make things easy for our clients."

6. Kokumin Kyosai Co-op (formally known as Zenrosai, Japan)

Legal structure: **cooperative**

Affinity groups: **labour and trade unions**

ICMIF Global 500 ranking: **49**

Business lines: **life, non-life and liability insurance**

Key products: **group and individual term life insurance, pensions, annuities, fire natural disaster and automobile**

Distribution channels: **shops, tied agents, trade unions**

Number of employees: **3,485**

Context



Zenrosai is a consumer cooperative established in September 1957 during a time when ordinary workers were poor and could not afford the insurance products that were on the market. It is comprised of 58 cooperative societies and has expanded its business in the past 60 years, working closely with trade unions to promote mutual aid and solidarity. Its target markets are workplaces and communities. [Click here to view the 2019 Annual Report.](#)

In 2019, it rebranded itself as "Kokumin Kyosai co-op" in order to become a friendly and approachable organisation to many more people.

The new name signifies that the insurer is a cooperative providing 'Kokumin' or all citizens with 'Kyosai' or cooperative insurance. Founded on the "One for All and All for One" ideal of cooperatives, Kokumin Kyosai co-op is organised on the basis of person-to-person cooperation.

Like many Japanese brands, Kokumin Kyosai Co-op has a long history of using cartoon characters to help its members get to know the organisation. The Pitt family are cartoon characters created by the cooperative insurer which are used in brochures and advertisements. The family of cartoon characters is very popular with members and one initiative by the insurer has been to create a range of soft toys based on the Pitt family. It is also now commonplace for members to see the Pitt family at events with people dressed up inside mascot suits based on the characters.



Not only that, but the Pitt family of characters are now often featured in advertising on the outsides of trains and buses in Japan, where they help promote Kokumin Kyosai co-op products.

Mission

We are a not-for-profit organisation, owned, managed and utilised by our members. Kokumin Kyosai co-op provides both life and non-life insurance to improve members' security in life. "Towards a safe and affluent society with mutual help".

Vision

Creating a safe and affluent society through mutual aid.

Value proposition

Lifestyle Security Design Programme - the goal is to enhance security and reduce household expenditure, and through consultation with our members consider the insurance coverage they truly need to prepare for uncertainties in a reasonable way through planning and implementing a life plan suited to their own needs.

Slogans and taglines:

'Co-creation' 'spirit of helping each other' 'creating a safety-net for society'

Story of the rebrand

Despite a solid financial foundation, over the past decade leading up to 2019, Zenrosai saw a decline in the total number of policies in force. And although they enjoyed good brand recognition, many people did not know about Zenrosai's business or product offerings, and its brand was not viewed as an important factor in selection of an insurance provider. This was particularly noticeable among young people. The company determined that it was becoming more difficult to retain customers and even its most loyal members with its current business model.

Zenrosai set about reviewing its origin and mission. In light of increasing social problems in today's world, its mission as a cooperative business and the values of mutuality have become even more important in order to provide support to people and society, and so would remain unchanged as these are considered timeless and universal. However, unless Zenrosai dynamically changed its business models, products and services it would not be able to attract new customers in the future.

The first step in this transformation, was a rebrand to declare its commitment to the public. The aim was "to reinvent itself to keep our cooperative values unchanged", and resulted in the organisation's new name, *Kokumin Kyosai co-op*:

- Kokumin meaning "for all citizens";
- Kyosai meaning "providing mutual aid system and spirit";
- and co-op, short for "cooperative".

In full, the name means *a cooperative organisation to provide mutual aid for all citizens in Japan*.

The inclusion of Kyosai was important as it means both "mutual aid system" and "spirit of helping each other", resulting in a brand that represented its cooperative mission and values and was easier to communicate to the public (especially younger generations).

Kokumin Kyosai co-op has continued its efforts toward the realisation of its philosophy of "building an affluent and safe society where people look after one another", through various activities based on the mechanism of mutual aid called "Kyosai" which is the name for cooperative insurance in Japan.

A digital survey was conducted by Kokumin Kyosai co-op in Japan in June 2020, with the aim of examining changes in whether or not people felt there was a spirit of mutual help, of community spirit and a willingness to help others during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were 3,000 respondents (1,482 men and 1,518 women) to the survey. The summary of the results is as follows:

- 66.9% of the respondents said that the COVID-19 problems heightened their “awareness of community spirit and people helping others”.
- In life during the state of emergency, the respondents appreciated the help from “family” (58.9%) and “essential workers” (31.6%).
- 46.1% of the respondents agreed that society demonstrates a good level of community spirit and people helping one another, which was an increase of nearly 20 points compared to the survey conducted prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Regarding the change in community spirit and a willingness to help others, more than half (57.9%) felt that there was no change. However, 32.8% answered that it increased, which was higher than 9.3% who said that it decreased.
- 82.2% empathised with the concept of “a society that looks after one another”.
- 90.2% agreed that society would need community spirit and people to help one another in the near future.

In response to this survey results, Kokumin Kyosai Co-op said: “By experiencing ‘community spirit and a willingness to help others’ during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is widely recognised that Japanese society will need ‘community spirit and people to help one another’ in the near future, and it can be seen that this has increased individual awareness from this survey”.

“Even though people are feeling they have benefitted from help and support under the influence of COVID-19 and they are taking actions in consideration for infection prevention, it is possible that this has not yet been clearly recognised as ‘community spirit and a willingness to help others’. So, it may be necessary to promote the vision of a sense of mutuality to build a society that demonstrates a good level of community spirit and people helping one another, or as we call it – mutual help”.

With the idea that “we may be able to live more comfortable life and create a human-friendly society if we can make helping one another both easier and more enjoyable”, Kokumin Kyosai Co-op has implemented the “ENJOY TASUKEAI (Mutual Help)” project (see image) since October 2019. As a part of this project, a special panel session was held involving up-and-coming professionals and young people in February 2020. It was aimed to collect mutual help stories from the public and highlight particularly impressive ones in order to encourage people to help neighbours and to do the good for community. The news of this event went viral via social media.



In addition, as social unrest spreads due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the cooperative insurer is developing the “Ima-Dekiru-Tasukeai” (Mutual Help in Difficult Times) initiative to try to prevent infection and to promote “community spirit and a willingness to help others”.

Based on the results of the June 2020 survey, Kokumin Kyosai Co-op says it will continue to work on the dissemination of “a sense of mutuality” through Kyosai and other various activities toward the realization of “a society that looks after one another”.

7. PPS (South Africa)

Full name:

The Professional Provident Society

Legal structure: **trust operating under the ethos of mutuality**

Affinity group: **graduate professionals**

ICMIF Global 500 ranking: **301**

Business lines: **diversified financial services provider (life, P&C, health, medical malpractice, investments and advice)**

Key products: **sickness cover, car and home, business retirement annuities and discretionary investments**

Number of employees: **circa 1,400**

Distribution channels: **intermediary, professional associations and some direct**

Purpose

Our purpose is to help our professional members (and their families) to protect their dreams and to live the lives they want to live.

Vision/mission

(To be) **The No-brainer** (financial solution) **for brainy people.**

Tagline

Success is better, Shared.

Context



Founded in 1941 during the Second World War by a group of eight dentists, today PPS is the largest multi-disciplinary group of graduate professionals in South Africa with over 150 000 members.

PPS offers tailor-made insurance, investment and healthcare solutions exclusively for graduate professionals.

PPS is the only financial services company in South Africa that operates under the ethos of mutuality and that focusses exclusively on graduate professionals.

The company belongs to its members – they are its shareholders. The company is also under the governance of members through their involvement in the board. The board consists mostly of elected members, representatives of professional associations and some co-opted specialists who join the board by invitation.

The PPS Profit-Share Account is the organisation's unique differentiator. This is the mechanism through which members with qualifying products share in the success of the company. Every year a portion of PPS annual profits and investment returns are "paid" to its members via allocations to their Profit-Share Accounts. The funds in the account accumulate over a member's working life and vests on retirement. Members get 100% of the business profits distributed to them; their profit allocations are not impacted directly by their individual claims experiences.

Value proposition

Mutuality, Exclusivity, Intelligent Solutions

Mutuality

Mutuality is an uncommon business model in South Africa where most large financial institutions are either privately held or publicly listed. There are a handful of South African companies, particularly financial services companies, that operate as mutuals and cooperatives. By size of assets, PPS is one of the larger mutuals in the country.

For many ordinary people, mutuality is a foreign concept only found in textbooks. The first order of business for PPS when in engaging in the market is to educate the people about mutuality, a notion they find *too good to be true*.

Marketing a mutual

The need to educate members and potential members about mutuality remains constant because the concept is not really well understood in the country. The focus of this case study is the PPS campaigns focussed on mutuality. They also have product-centric campaigns.



PPS launched its first-ever television advert in 2012. The objective of the TV campaign was to simplify and explain the concept of mutuality in a way that would make it accessible to a market that has little understanding of what it means. The advert told the story of two rival bakeries and why one succeeded and the other not. They worked closely with ICMIF and the agency in developing the creative concept.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

The mutuality explainer



They developed this video to help members understand what it is that differentiates the PPS mutual model in a “sea of sameness”. The video also explains how the model eliminates the unavoidable conflict that comes from shareholder interests vs member interests. By virtue of membership, all PPS members have an ownership interest in the business. (The full value of this ownership only becomes apparent on retirement when the PPS Profit-Share Account vests). This is a valuable educational tool that helps members to understand the unique benefits that come with being a member.

[Click here to watch the video.](#)

The mutual business practice

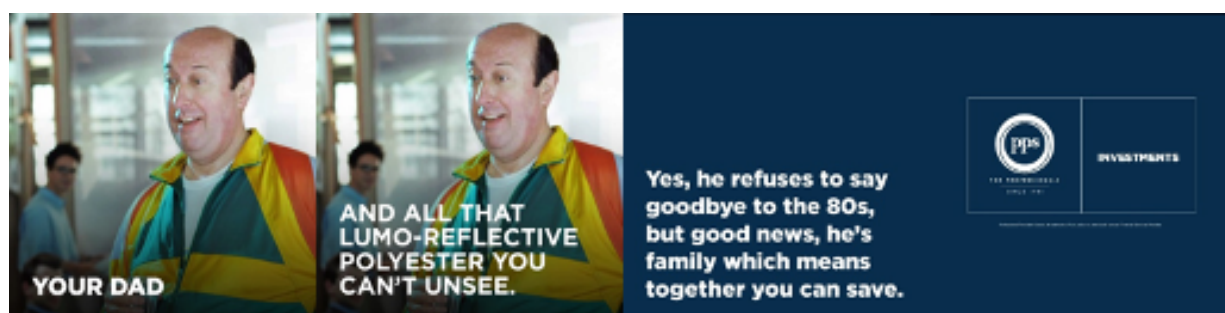
In 2019, PPS launched a bold new proposition called PRO-FiT. The name is a play on the word “profit” and the concept of fitness – which can be applied to physical, mental and financial fitness. PRO-FiT is a platform that allows self-service as well as leveraging the power of the community for good. They recognise that professionals are time-starved and therefore value convenience and efficiency.

By creating a (broker-inclusive) self-service channel and curating select offers such as “U cook”, a prepacked meals service and Advantage Learn, a high school maths tuition service PPS “manufactures” time in the hand of the professional.

The Profit Share Playzone is a tool in PRO-FiT that allows members to do scenario planning and view how a combination of solutions not only gives them great cover but also creates value through the profit share.

Conscious not to offer another rewards programme in a world filled with rewards programmes; the PPS answer is to provide solutions that specifically add value. The Short Term Insurance business offers members convenient concierge services like six chauffeur services per annum, licence disc renewal and fine payment services. In South Africa, paying fines and renewing licence discs can consume an inordinate amount of time waiting in queues.

Investment fees left unchecked can deplete the value of an investment. To address this problem, PPS Investments created the Family Network, a solution that allows members of a family to save in individual accounts that are grouped in order to give them access to lower fees based on their combined asset value. Creating a micro scale of the mutual model.



Finally, through sponsorship of flagship events with professional associations, PPS positions itself as a thinking partner for professionals in South Africa. In 2018 PPS hosted its first-ever “Singularity U” PPS Members Forum with leading thinkers from across the globe.

Profit Share Booster



[Click here to visit the website.](#)

This is the latest innovation launched by PPS (as of October 2020). The Profit Share Booster is an elegant solution that rewards members for incorporating diverse solutions from PPS into their portfolios. The more products and solutions that a member takes up, the higher his or her profit share participation. This concept draws on classic symbiotic relationships found in nature. Further illustrating how the unique PPS model creates a “mutuality” beneficial relationship by design.

Success, truly shared



In 2019, PPS released a series of member stories. In these intimate, true short stories, members shared how PPS helped them to triumph over adversity and what it really means to be a PPS Member. The stories have happy endings and highlight how much members stand to receive in money and peace of mind on retirement.

Mutuality is at the centre of the PPS identity. It is how PPS enriches the lives of its members and enables them to live the lives they want to live. It is the sole focus of the business. Judging from PPS’ consistently great returns, sustainability and growth in members over the years – success is truly better, shared.

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