



# Traditional vs. Technology-backed Brokers

Provided by: The Benefits Group

## Are your benefits the best they can be?

Traditionally, insurance brokers have only focused on offering insurance guidance, which includes tasks like quoting plans, negotiating renewals, comparing plans and submitting applications. Over the past few years, though, health care reform has shaken the industry. As health care costs continue to rise and more regulatory requirements are placed on employers, the need for a broker who can engage employees and leverage technology to streamline administrative tasks has increased.

That's where The Benefits Group can help. The Benefits Group gives you the expert guidance that makes the benefits selection, implementation and analysis process smoother, plus we're technology-backed and can offer you our HR online tool, HRconnection®, to make the benefits administration process more efficient.

Is your current broker a trusted advisor who can offer expert help and technology to help make benefits administration easier? If not, it's time to take a look at what you're getting. With traditional brokers, you won't receive the benefits support, employee communications, and personalized service that The Benefits Group can provide.

The following chart compares what The Benefits Group can offer compared to traditional brokers.

	Traditional Brokers	The Benefits Group
Employee Portal	Traditional brokers do not have the technology to ease the administrative burden associated with HR tasks. As a result, HR personnel can be bogged down with managing paperwork, repetitive employee requests and ineffective enrollment processes.	The Benefits Group offers HRconnection®, a powerful employee communication portal that helps boost productivity and cost savings by providing a simplified intuitive benefits enrollment process and a modern user interface through which employees can help themselves to HR and benefits information online anytime—freeing up HR personnel to devote more time to strategic issues.

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<p><b>Content</b></p>	<p>Traditional brokers do not have a content library, employee educational articles, videos, newsletters or wellness program materials that can be used to help your employees become smarter health care consumers and reduce costs.</p>	<p>The Benefits Group can provide you with content to meet your and your employees' needs, and we give you access to MyWave® Connect, a content portal, where you can find answers to complex benefits and HR questions and resources 24/7. Need help with compliance? Want employee newsletters? Need articles explaining benefits or related topics? Want to start a wellness program or make benefits education fun with short videos for employees? Whatever you're looking for, we can deliver content customized for you.</p>
<p><b>ACA Compliance Tools</b></p>	<p>Traditional brokers do not have technology or tools available to assist with Affordable Care Act (ACA) compliance. As a result, you're on your own when it comes time to determine your number of full-time employees, ensure that your plans provide minimum value, decipher complex IRS reporting requirements and more—all of which can trigger compliance violations and penalties if not completed correctly.</p>	<p>Health care reform can be overwhelming. There are countless rules and regulations governing employee benefit plans, many of which are complex. The Benefits Group provides you with access to valuable resources like our Full-time Employer Tracker, Section 6055 and 6056 Reporting Workbooks, Cadillac Tax Calculator, and ACA Reporting Tool (which outputs completed IRS forms) to help you evaluate and avoid any potential penalties. These tools help save you time and allow you to focus on what's really important—running your business.</p>
<p><b>Human Resources Tools</b></p>	<p>Traditional brokers are not seasoned HR professionals. As a result, you're required to create human resources policies on your own, including your employee handbook, which can be a daunting task. In addition, traditional brokers don't provide access to highly skilled HR professionals who can answer HR-related questions at your convenience.</p>	<p>The Benefits Group provides insightful HR articles, forms and communications, including access to a sample employee handbook to help defend against wrongful termination, discrimination and harassment claims. In addition, The Benefits Group offers an HR Hotline, which provides on-demand HR expertise. HR professionals, available by phone or email, are ready to answer your HR-related questions—helping take the questions out of benefits administration.</p>

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<b>Year-round Support</b>	<p>Traditional brokers may only be heard from when your renewal time nears. In the meantime, you're left to fend for yourself and stay up-to-date on compliance issues affecting you and your employees.</p>	<p>The Benefits Group is here for you year-round. Open enrollment is often the most challenging time of the year, but we don't abandon you the other 11 months of the year. We help you choose the best benefits, guide you through the open enrollment process, and sit down with you to develop strategic plans for lowering costs due to health claims. We understand that benefits are more than just benefits—they're an important recruitment and retention tool, and choosing the right ones will help you keep your employees happy. We also provide you with timely compliance information so you're never left to struggle on your own.</p>
<b>Plan Designs</b>	<p>Traditional brokers are able to provide quotes and negotiate rates, but fail to dig deeper and offer a hard-hitting analysis into what others in your industry, region, and those of similar size are doing from a plan design perspective.</p>	<p>The Benefits Group analyzes your benefits plan costs against reliable benchmark information, projects the impact of medical and dental plan changes, estimates your renewal costs and streamlines the plan selection process for your employees.</p>
<b>Data Analysis</b>	<p>Traditional brokers do not have the analytical tools or technology to breakdown plan data and identify areas for improvement. As a result, claims data is never compared to industry norms to detect cost and utilization disparities and employers continue to waste precious resources.</p>	<p>Using employee claim data from your carrier or TPA, our internet-based Decision Master® Warehouse system analyzes your data and helps you discover how and where to adjust your plan to save money. The Benefits Group can even model recommended changes to demonstrate potential savings.</p>

## Traditional or Technology-backed?

When you choose between The Benefits Group and a traditional broker, consider what makes us different. Are you looking for a benefits expert who can provide the latest data procurement and analysis techniques, as well as legislative resources and technology that streamlines communications and human resources administration? Or are you looking to maintain the status quo?

If you're looking for a trusted advisor who is technology-backed to meet your needs, contact The Benefits Group today.

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