

Leaderboard: Growing to meet challenges of changing care models

As discussions get to be more complicated, Fairfield firm aims to have all the answers

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By [Beth Fitzgerald](#)

Employee benefits consultant Benefit Sources & Solutions Chadler has spent years developing the expertise to guide employers through the 2010 Affordable Care Act, which next year will levy fines on employers with more than 50 full-time workers that don't offer a health plan.



The Affordable Care Act has created tremendous opportunities for benefits consultants, says Scott Rappoport.

And all that homework is paying off: several smaller benefits consulting firms have decided to merge into the Fairfield-based company, said President Scott Rappoport. BS&SC was a 10-person consulting firm in the middle of 2012, and will probably be close to 20 by the end of this year.

“Other professionals are coming to us and saying, 'We can't take care of our clients as a small independent (benefits consultant), and we would like to be part of your organization,'” he said. These smaller benefits brokers and consultants bring their clients and support staff to BS&SC: “We are acquiring blocks of business because smaller brokers don't have the resources” to navigate employers through the ACA.

Rappoport said he is in active talks right now with three benefits firms that want to come on board.

“The typical benefits broker historically has been able to support the middle market,” Rappoport said. “But as it has become more complicated, they need more resources to be relevant in the marketplace.”

BS&SC, which advises employers that want to set up benefit plans, like health coverage and 401(k) retirement plans, is a member of Indianapolis-based United Benefit Advisors, a national consortium of employee benefits firms. UBA created an online resource center solely devoted to the ACA — and recently opened it up to non-UBA members.

“This has become so complex that rather than just keep this under wraps for our own consultants, we are putting it in the public domain,” where employers, other benefit advisers and the general public can get

answers to their questions about the ACA, Rappoport said.

“We knew that from a business perspective, the market upheaval (from the ACA) would create probably the most significant opportunity that we've ever seen in the employee benefits business, and we needed to be well prepared,” Rappoport said. “It is beyond belief, the additional amount of work (the ACA) has created — but at the same time, it gives us continued vibrancy in the business.”

Rappoport isn't expecting many of his clients to cancel their health plans, pay the penalties and send their employees to buy coverage on the new health insurance exchange where health insurers will begin selling policies later this year. “Employee benefits are one component of an overall compensation package, and employers provide benefits because they want to attract and retain quality people,” he said.

E-mail to: beth@njbiz.com

On Twitter: [@bethfitzgerald8](https://twitter.com/bethfitzgerald8)

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