

# VYOND



## COTTINGHAM & BUTLER [ insurance broker ]

Cottingham & Butler videos reduce the amount of time clients spend on-boarding new employees, while increasing employees' understanding of their benefits and giving them access to information they might not get otherwise. Check out one of their videos [here](#).

### SUMMARY of SUCCESS

100%

Unprecedented sign-ups achieved during open enrollment across 500+ employees.

2,000

Non-productive meeting time hours saved by client teams since 2014.

60

Hours of travel and time saved that would have been spent in meetings in 2015 alone.

\$600,000+

Potential production costs avoided by creating videos in-house.

## THE CHALLENGE

How do you deliver open enrollment information to a cross-country trucker? That was the challenge that Cottingham & Butler, one of the largest brokers and employee benefits consultants in the United States, wanted to solve for its clients. Founded in 1887, the company has a client roster that spans industries, with specific expertise in transportation, agribusiness, construction, and manufacturing.

Cottingham & Butler's clients offer benefits to employee populations ranging from 50 to several thousand: many of whom are transient and hard to pin down for traditional meetings. Employee benefits is a complex topic, and without an office location or access to company email, employers can spend hundreds of hours trying to make sure employees have and understand the information they need.

"Sometimes the employee materials are 100-page documents from insurance carriers that are written in complex legal language," says Ellen Lichtenstein, Communications Manager for Cottingham & Butler's employee benefits division. "Our clients need help making sure all employees understand their benefits options, regardless of an employee's location, job function, or level of education."

In 2014, Cottingham & Butler brought in Lichtenstein, who has a decade of television, film, and radio production experience, to manage employee-facing communication and benefits education for its clients. However, the big issue still remained: how to reach employees all over the country and in a way that would engage them in their employer's benefits.

the price would still be between \$12,000 and \$20,000 per year.

"We're a medium-sized broker, and because we're providing these videos to clients as part of our overall services, we can't spend thousands of dollars on a single video," says Lichtenstein.

## Cottingham & Butler's clients loved the idea of video, but no one loved the hefty price tag.

Cottingham & Butler's clients loved the idea of video (both live action and animated) to help explain complex benefits concepts to their employees. What no one cared for was the price tag. Lichtenstein solicited quotes from local and national vendors and production companies, only to find that the custom videos would run upwards of \$7,000 for five minutes of live-action or around \$5,000 for the same length of animation. If she sacrificed the ability to customize videos and invested in a library of generic videos,

"That's just not doable. Some of our videos run as long as 12 minutes, and we often make collections of videos for clients that exceed 25 minutes. An animated video could easily cost us \$10,000 if we were paying someone to create it in After Effects."

## THE SOLUTION

Lichtenstein spent a few months researching various options, but once she found Vyond, the choice became a “no-brainer.” During the free trial and a subsequent one-month subscription, she made several sample videos to share Vyond’s capabilities with her team.

“Everyone was sold immediately,” she says. “I told them we wouldn’t find anything else at this price point that would allow us to customize the animation to our needs.”

Thanks to Vyond, Cottingham & Butler doesn’t have to travel to film clients on location or hire talent. Clients who choose to star in their own animations simply read a script provided by Lichtenstein and email her their recordings, which she then syncs with a character built to resemble the live person. For clients who want voiceover provided, Lichtenstein (who has a background in public radio) or other colleagues record in their on-site studio.

“Our only expense has been \$350 to build our ‘recording studio.’ That covers a good-quality USB microphone, a sound isolation shield, and a microphone stand,” says Lichtenstein. “We use music and sound effects from the [Vyond] library or other free sources. In other words, we

can make professional, customized videos on virtually no budget.”

When it comes to production, Lichtenstein was already fluent with video and audio editing solutions like Final Cut, Adobe Premiere, Adobe Audition, and Audacity. She says she found Vyond easy to use yet sophisticated and highly customizable.

**Vyond allows the end product to reflect the skills of its creator, from simple to extremely complex.**

“I found [Vyond] very intuitive,” she says. “Everything worked the way that I’d expect it to. It allows the end product to reflect the skills of its creator from simple to extremely complex.”

One of Lichtenstein’s favorite Vyond features is that she can leave time-coded notes for herself within the video itself, rather than having to write them out by hand. She also likes the ability to insert “placeholder” voices using the text-to-speech functionality.

“With the number of times a script changes during production, it would be horrible if we had to keep re-recording perfect audio,” she explains. “With [Vyond], you don’t have to invest the time to get a great recording until the script is completely finalized.”

After a year of using Vyond in the benefits department, Cottingham & Butler upgraded

to a GoTeam subscription and expanded the solution’s use to its health and wellness provider, HealthCheck360o, which uses Vyond to make videos for the members of its wellness programs, alerting them to health screenings and other initiatives.

## THE RESULTS

Since June 2014, Lichtenstein estimates that she and her team have made more than 200 animated videos, totaling over 1,300 minutes. Vyond helped Cottingham & Butler reap the full benefits of using video, while avoiding an estimated \$600,000 to \$1.4 million in potential production costs, based on the quotes received from her external vendors. More importantly, Lichtenstein says, without Vyond Cottingham & Butler wouldn't have been able to create videos at all, which would have made the company less competitive against brokers with larger budgets and more resources.

Vyond also saves Cottingham & Butler time and makes the company more efficient by allowing the team to create videos quickly: Lichtenstein says she can create a five-minute video in about five hours.

"Once I've built a template for a certain type of video, I can customize it for a client within a day if they need it that quickly," says Lichtenstein. "Our clients are very happy with the end product and the turnaround times."

Lichtenstein believes that Vyond has saved Cottingham & Butler's internal team at least 60

hours of travel and time that would have been spent in meetings at client sites in 2015 alone!

Vyond also produces time savings for clients. Cottingham & Butler videos reduce the amount of time clients spend on-boarding new employees, while increasing employees' understanding of their benefits and giving them access to information they might not get otherwise. Lichtenstein estimates that since implementing Vyond in 2014, they've saved their clients' HR teams about 2,200 hours they would otherwise be spending in employee meetings.

"If our videos do a good job, the HR team fields fewer questions," says Lichtenstein. "They're spending their time on more important things than answering the same benefits-related question over and over."

And by any metric, the videos have been more than successful. "We've never had a client that isn't just in love with their videos," Lichtenstein says. "They rave about them. I get calls all the time about how much the employees loved them."

For example, one Cottingham & Butler client used the videos in conjunction with direct mail to

advertise open enrollment to its 500 employees. During the two-week open enrollment period, all 500 employees called in to sign up for their benefits—a 100% success rate that Cottingham & Butler had never seen before. Also, participation in several programs increased dramatically: For example, enrollment in short-term disability increased from 28% of employees to 70%.

"Plus, the [Vyond] customer support team is phenomenal," says Lichtenstein. "We certainly have gotten way more than we pay for."



*Click the screen above to see a sample video created by Cottingham & Butler*