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Arkansas Business Exec Q&A

To submit questions or interview suggestions, email GMoritz@ABPG.com

This Week: Jason Mann

President and CEO of Life & Specialty Ventures of Little Rock



Bio: Jason Mann

Current Position: President and CEO of Life & Specialty Ventures of Little Rock, the holding company for USable Life of Little Rock and Florida Combined Life of Jacksonville, Fla., since its founding in 2005.

Background: Founded, developed and sold three businesses that provided administration or personnel services for insurance companies. Joined Arkansas Blue Cross & Blue Shield in 1993 to manage provider contracting, was promoted to oversee ABCBS' southwest region and later named president of Southwest Health Link LLC, a partnership between ABCBS and Christus St. Michael Health System.

Education: Bachelor's degree from Baylor University at Waco, Texas, and a Charter Life Underwriter designation from American College.



Exec Q&A With Jason Mann

Life & Specialty Ventures of Little Rock is USable Life Insurance Co. and a whole lot more.

Jason Mann runs a company whose subsidiaries, including USable Life of Little Rock, generate annual revenue of more than \$478 million, employ more than 500 people and provide insurance to more than 2.7 million individual members. Life & Specialty Ventures is owned by six Blue Cross & Blue Shield plans and has distribution agreements with Blue Cross plans in nine other states.

What challenges are you facing in this economy in keeping the customers you have and attracting new ones? Our research shows that Americans are underinsured, have too much debt and require assistance to manage financial and health decisions under economic conditions that remain uncertain. Given that, we focus on offering reasonably priced products and services that provide a greater level of comfort and security for customers. We've strengthened relationships with current customers by deploying technologies that make it easier for them to do business with us. These technologies also are helping us attract new customers by enhancing our ability to develop new products that are tailored to reach specific customer needs. USable is focused on providing value-added products, services and support that will attract and retain employer groups, their employees and individuals. The response from the marketplace tells us we're on the right track.

You were a former Arkansas Blue Cross & Blue Shield regional sales executive. What attracted you to the CEO position? I was fortunate to be asked to lead LSV when it was founded in 2005 as a joint venture between the Arkansas and Florida Blue Cross & Blue Shield plans. This was a tremendous opportunity to build a strong management team that would provide the experience and expertise our company needed to add value for

our Blue Cross partners while providing insurance products that help our customers.

In 2010, USable Life had a record year for premium, sales and total revenue. Tell us specifically how you accomplished those feats. Our success is really a story about how our team has used our deep consumer knowledge to provide a consultative sales approach and tools to educate consumers and support their financial and health decisions. We also added two Blue Cross partners in 2010, allowing us to reach new markets with products that are innovative and simple to understand. Our approach included enhancing our sales and

marketing efforts.

What does the future hold for USable? Our recent investment of \$17 million to buy a new headquarters building in west Little Rock really says it all. We're putting down roots in our hometown and building for the future. Our entire team is united behind our plan to reach \$1.5 billion in revenue during the next few years.