



The Local Broker Renaissance

Turning the tide on consolidation by redefining and empowering the 'local broker'



INTRODUCTION

Gauntlet AR Network has celebrated its 15th anniversary and marked 15 years of launching some of the most dynamic independent brokers into the UK insurance market. Seeing our partner brokers grow, thrive and achieve their prosperity goals has been rewarding and provided vindication that we got our appointed representative offering right.

Back in 2009, the motivation of most of the start-up brokers who joined forces with Gauntlet was to simply become their own boss and achieve a dream of running their own insurance brokerage. Fast-forward to 2025 and we believe the reasons are now more market-driven than fuelled by personal motivation.

SO WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THIS?

In simple terms, we believe that we are now attracting brokers who have fallen out of the insurance consolidation process, one way or another. The UK market has seen hundreds of broker acquisitions, particularly in the past three years. Traditional local brokers have disappeared from the insurance distribution map, as foreign investors and insurance giants have eyed the UK market and swallowed up independent businesses.

Where does this leave the sector? In short, we believe it creates one huge opportunity for the Gauntlet Appointed Representative Network and what we have termed the 'local broker renaissance'. The fall-out from consolidation presents us with the chance to leverage all of our unique selling points as an AR network and put brokers well and truly back on the map.



CONSOLIDATION AND ITS IMPACT ON PROFESSIONAL BROKERS

Consolidation has proved a long road to discontent for many talented and professional account execs and brokers who care about their clients. The promises that many consolidators made, when buying out a business, have not been kept. Absorbed businesses have lost their identities. Clients have become numbers on a spreadsheet. Those broking individuals who relished their close client contact have become cogs in a machine, simply having to pick up a file and deal with a 'case', rather than having a meaningful dialogue that builds a true relationship.

For any truly professional client, the evidence is clear. Clients are being short-changed by a system that has depersonalised insurance delivery and potentially exposed clients to higher levels of risk, if whoever is picking up the file does not appreciate the client's business inside-out.

Clients are hugely dissatisfied and disillusioned. What might have initially looked like a shiny new business handling their insurance needs has turned out to be a call centre, where it is almost impossible to speak to the same person, each time a need arises. Clients are now wanting to know where to get professional, personalised help and want to go retro. Rather than viewing the traditional commercial broker as an old-fashioned insurance choice, the astute business is now recognising that this is, by far, the best option. Working with a broker is increasingly being viewed as the preferred way to competently cover a business's risks.

But consolidation has done more than this. It has also left a whole swathe of smaller brokers stranded. With insufficient premium income to attract the eye of a consolidator, and too little to secure insurer agencies, they are marooned within the insurance world.

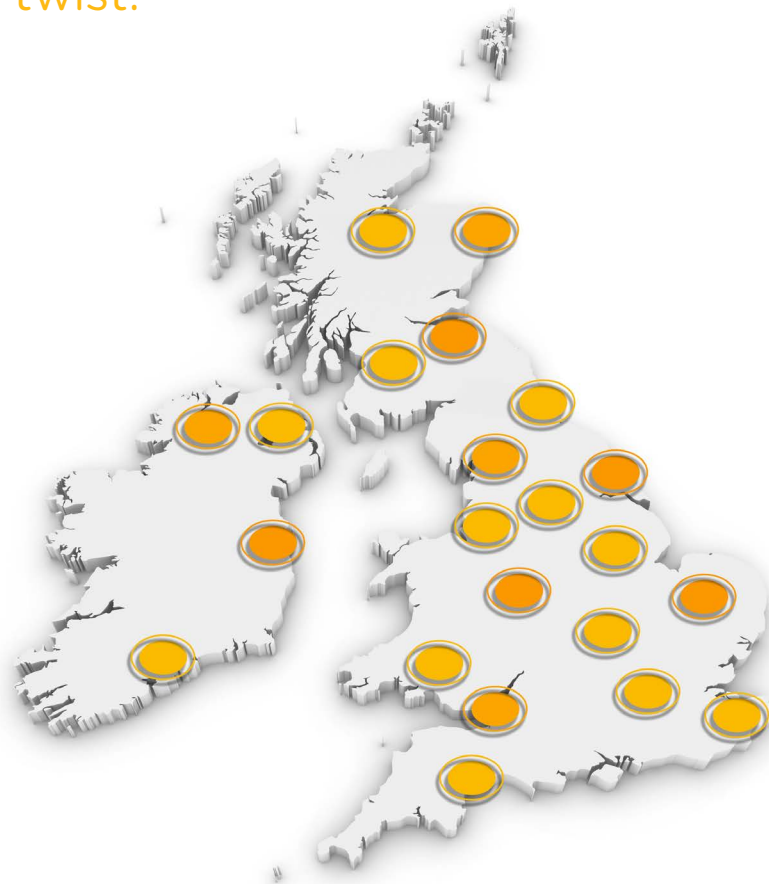
Many also encounter issues when trying to fund a new IT system that will enable the business to try to compete with bigger businesses. There are often complications surrounding access to PI cover. On top of this, there is all the FCA compliance reporting required. Altogether, it's a massive headache.

OTHER BROKERS JOINING GAUNTLET'S LOCAL BROKER RENAISSANCE

Consolidation has also created another band of brokers. These are the brokers who sold out, have served their term with the consolidator and are now free agents, as it were. These individuals, often still some way off retirement, recognise they need something to occupy their time. They see that there is a massive opportunity in the market, if they can quickly start up another business.

Here at Gauntlet Group, we too see the opportunity. Our finger is on the pulse of the market to a greater degree than any other network, because the driving force of our business and the generator of our extreme buying power is our own direct sales team. Our in-house account execs are smashing their own targets, because clients want good service from a local broker and they are delivering that, with complete client satisfaction. They are creating the blueprint for many of the new brokers who are joining us as appointed representatives.

Taking all of this into account, we believe the local broker renaissance is a very real phenomenon. We are putting local brokers back on the map with each passing month, with these brokers located across the UK. The thing to recognise is that our definition of local broking comes with a compelling twist.



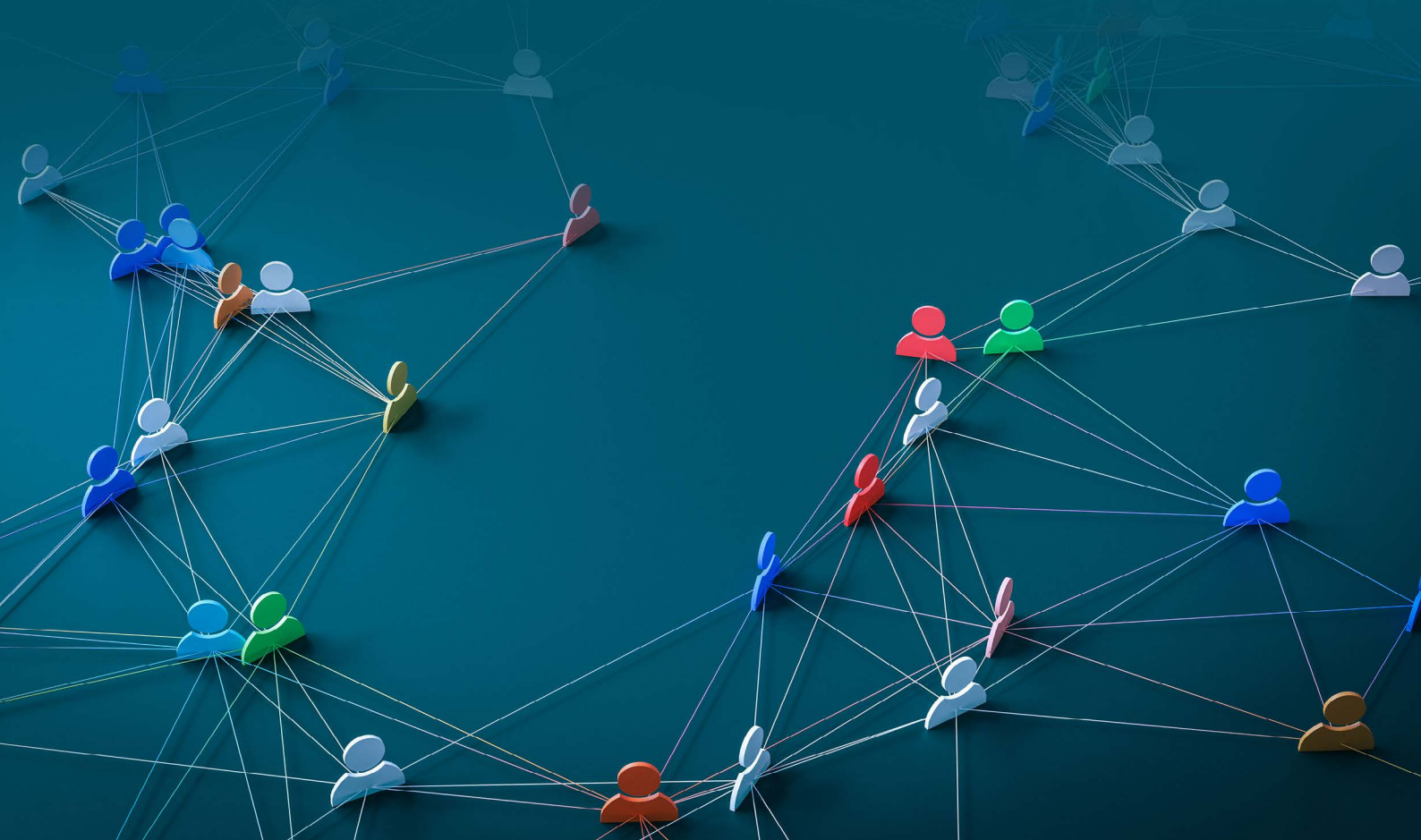
LOCAL START-UP BROKERS – THE GAUNTLET AR NETWORK WAY

A local broker with the Gauntlet AR Network is one who is not struggling to compete. If they have the talent, any broker joining our network can instantly benefit from what we mentioned earlier – our extreme buying power.

Our direct sales team is one that was founded 30 years ago. It grew, initially, in the bus and coach sector, but it is now delivering a wide variety of commercial insurance products to clients nationwide.

But there's more. We also have a direct sales team purely focused on personal lines insurance, whether that is for high-net-worth clients, owners of holiday homes, or those seeking a wide range of other personal insurance covers.

Add all of this to the buying power that is derived from our AR network too and it adds up to a highly attractive proposition for insurers. We have long-standing relationships with very many of the biggest and highest-rated names in the country and are able to achieve highly attractive commission rates.



All of this means we can redefine the local broker. Our local broker is one who has access to over 200 insurers and facilities, so has phenomenal market reach. It is one who is earning very attractive levels of commission on their sales. It is one that has the force of our buying power propelling them in every sales negotiation. It is one who is also able to leverage all the benefits of the Acturis IT system to which they have access. This is a system which we have honed, tailored and tweaked, to serve the needs of our appointed representatives.

Our local broker can stand up and be counted in any competitive environment. With the ability to deliver what consolidators cannot – the personal service that clients are now, once again, crying out for – any local broker trading as a Gauntlet appointed representative has every opportunity to turn the tide on consolidation and the consolidated marketplace.

If you also factor in the fact that we are members of the Brokerability network – a decision we took to offer our AR brokers access to the sorts of schemes and products that aligned with their customer bases – you can see why our local brokers are individuals who offer so much more than the local broker of yesteryear. The twist that we have provided to the local broker model is compelling, effective and helping talented broking individuals quickly build highly profitable businesses, in which, as true partners, we fuel their growth month after month.



THE RENAISSANCE OF DIRECTLY AUTHORISED BROKERS

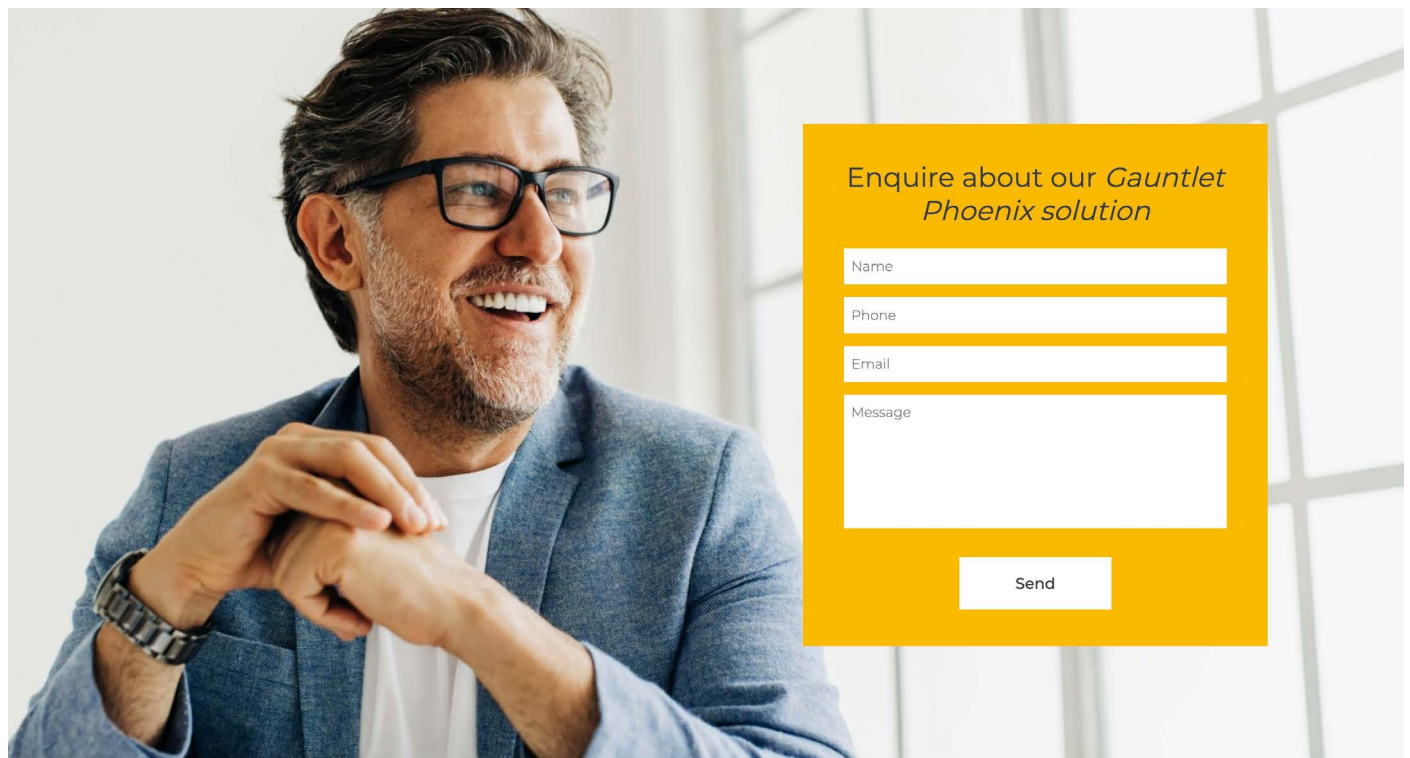
When we consider our local broker renaissance, we also need to focus on the rebirth we have given to smaller brokers – those who had been ghosted by the insurance industry and left floundering in the shallows.

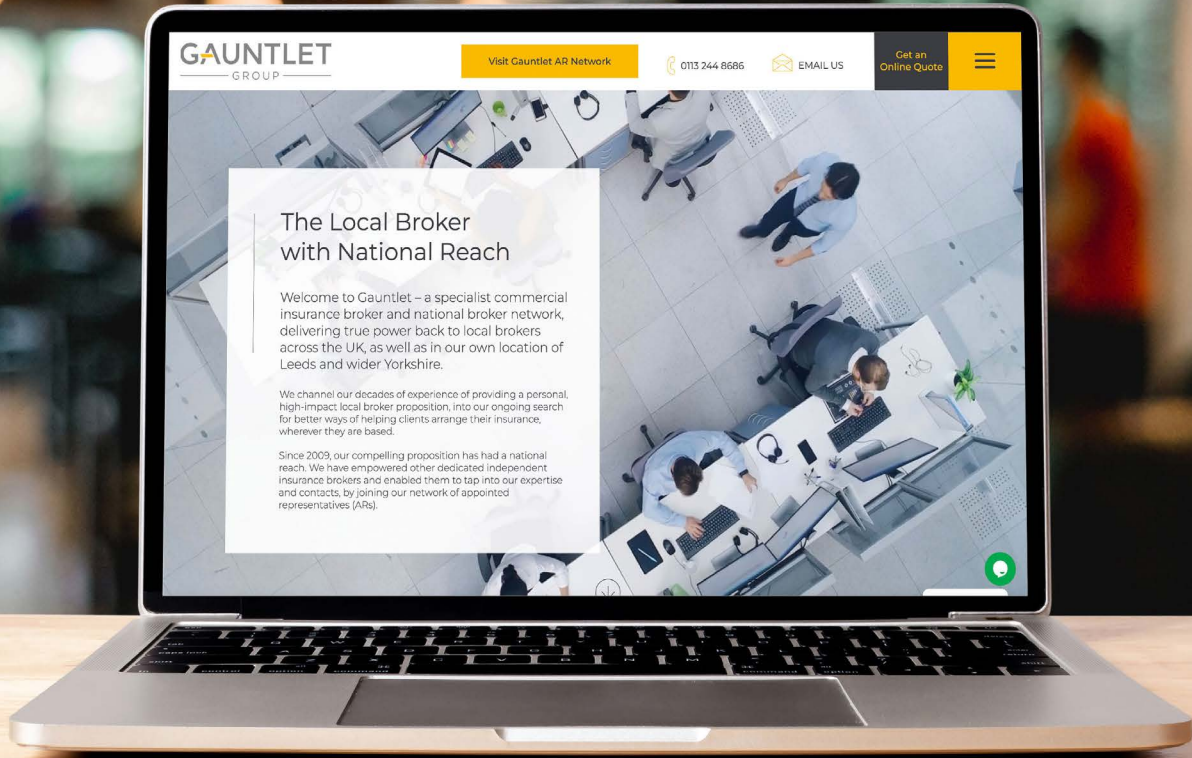
By creating our Gauntlet Deauthorisation Fast-track process, we have been able to turn around the fortunes of individuals who were in this situation within 6-8 weeks. By relinquishing direct authorisation and changing their status to appointed representative, a number of brokers have literally been reborn. All it needed to start the revitalisation process was access to market, a great IT system, and the chance to get back to broking, by allowing our head office team to take on board all of their compliance, accounting, and even, if they wish, broking placement.

Rather than having smaller brokers remain in a perilous position, where closing their door seemed the only option, we have engineered a solution that is proven to work. Rather than losing out on income, the brokers who have taken this option have actually found themselves better off, because opportunities are always knocking. Client demands can easily be matched with products and they have time to focus on client relationships and sales tactics, rather than being consumed by red tape.

THE RENAISSANCE OF 'RETIRED' BROKERS

Since the launch of our Gauntlet Phoenix proposition, we have also been able to offer a rebirth to brokers who sold a previous business but who are now free from legal restrictions on starting up again. A number of brokers in this bracket are now also becoming Gauntlet local brokers with a twist, quickly re-establishing themselves in the market and recognising that the appointed representative model is nowadays a far more attractive proposition than direct authorisation.





If you take a look at our Gauntlet Group website, you will see that we literally put local brokers on the map. Our website is geared up to direct potential customers towards the broker that best seems to suit them, whether that is through the broker's specialisation or their location.

In addition, we offer our local brokers the opportunity to benefit from lead generation, with many fuelling their businesses through this route.

We provide our local brokers with access to sales PDFs and other ready-to-use material, so that they can target clients and seek to cross-sell products.

We also recognise the role of peer networking in keeping our brokers motivated and feeling less isolated within the world of broking. Our annual AR conference, and other workshops and training events, are intended to keep our ARs abreast of insurer products and developments. However, they are equally well attended because they allow ARs to pick up tips and hints from their counterparts in other broking businesses.

Our philosophy is to keep brokers on the map by allowing them to have direct contact with insurers, to 'own' their clients and to place any size of business they wish to go for. Other networks cannot say the same.

Add to this our provision of a potential exit route for their business, by moving clients into Gauntlet Group in either a complete or phased fashion, when they want to think about retiring, and it all adds up to a model that is there to fully support local brokers at every stage of their broking journey.

STARTING THE JOURNEY

The local broker renaissance is powered by a constant stream of individuals joining the Gauntlet AR Network and sharing our vision.

They could be Gauntlet Start-up Brokers, joining us straight from an employed role as an account exec.

As we have discussed, they could be Gauntlet De-authorisation Fast-track brokers, moving from directly authorised status to that of appointed representative, to be reborn as brokers.

They can be Gauntlet Phoenix brokers, accessing a level of support that recognises that the individuals concerned have already been there and done that as independent brokers, so only need certain elements of our service provision.

But they could also be those individuals who share the vision of the local broker renaissance but do not have the financial resource to step away from employment and instantly abandon a salaried role, to take the gamble of making it as a self-employed AR.

For these individuals, often with young families or less confidence in themselves as self-starters, we offer a 'try before you fly' option – Gauntlet Brokerage Builder. Those taking this option can leave a role as an account exec and join us as a salaried Broking Partner Designate. With a salary-plus-sales-bonus package behind them, they are guided through a specially devised training period, which covers all of the aspects they need to take on board when running their own brokerage.

With targets to hit along the way, this is a really good test of whether they could make it as self-employed brokers in the real world. If they have what it takes, they can build a future client base as they go, so they leave the programme with a ready-made book of business, which they can then build further, as they run their own businesses. This option is one unique to Gauntlet. And the clients they take with them are their clients.



SUMMING UP

However, you decide to start the AR journey with Gauntlet – which could, of course, include moving across from another AR network to leverage our unique benefits – you can become a part of the vibrant local broker renaissance that we are driving.

You can play a role in turning the tide on consolidation and giving clients the level of insurance provision they deserve.

You can also put yourself well and truly on the map and stay there, using our buying power to propel your business forward and hit your goals time after time.

Isn't it time you took a long hard look at the option that suits you and joined the local broker renaissance? The way to do that is pick up the phone and talk to Nigel Law on 07774 690436, for an initial totally confidential chat. Alternatively, you can or fill in our enquiry form at <https://appointedrepresentatives.com/how-to-become-a-broker/> or email NigelLaw@GauntletGroup.com.

